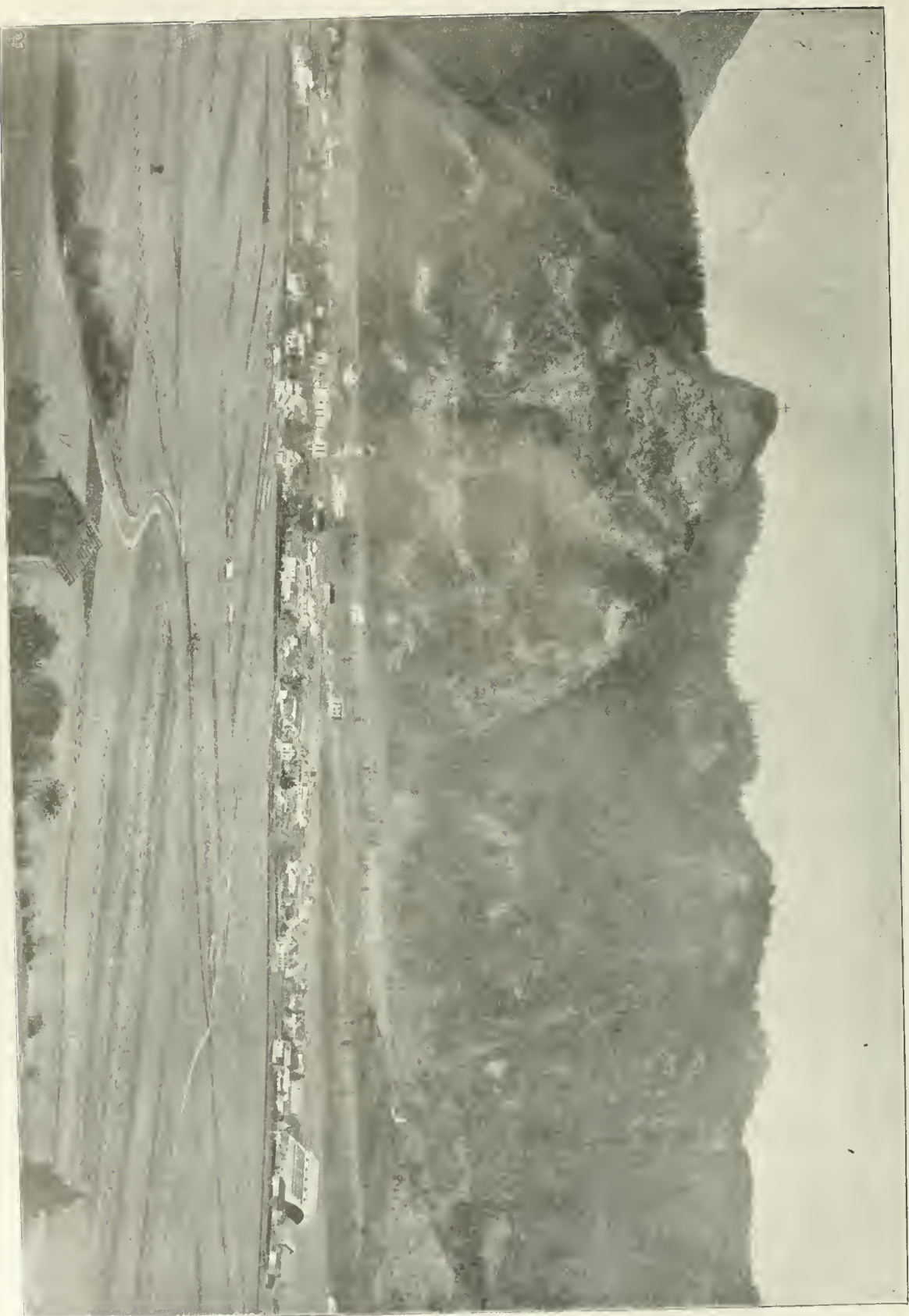


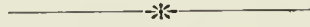
Oberammergau *and its Passion Play.*





Oberammergau.

Oberammergau and its Passion Play.



A Retrospect
of the
History of Oberammergau and its Passion Play
from the commencement up to the Present Day
also
Full Description of the Country and the Manners and Customs of the People.



Text by
Hermine Diemer, née von Hillern.

Translation by Walter S. Manning.



Illustrations
from Drawings by Zeno Diemer and Fritz Tersch
and from Photographs
by Leo Schweyer, Stuttgart (official Publication of 1900), K. Christa,
M. Dietrich, F. Hoch, Hugo Lang jr. etc.



Munich and Oberammergau 1900.
Printed and Published by Carl Aug. Seyfried & Co. (Proprietors Carl Aug. Seyfried and Carl Schnell)
Munich.

Agents in Oberammergau: Georg Lang sel. Erben.
Agents in England: Hugo Lang & Co., Liverpool.



All rights reserved.



Printing & Binding by Carl Aug. Seyfried & Co., Munich.

Paper from the Gauting Paper Mills, Gauting (near Munich).

Photo engravings by Brendamour, Simhart & Co., Munich.

PREFACE

When in the winter of the year 1899 I received the flattering request of the publishing firm, Carl Aug. Seyfried & Co., Munich, to write a work upon Oberammergau, I set about the task with strongly conflicting sentiments. On the one hand I was only too pleased to have an opportunity of opposing the many wide-spread prejudices, which exist against Oberammergau and its Play; on the other hand I was afraid that, owing to the limited time afforded me, an exhaustive study of the subject would be impossible. Now that I am near the end of the finished work, I must say, that I am deeply indebted to my publishers for having suggested my writing a book, which, with their assistance, will probably be unique, both in artistic finish and in wealth of subject matter.

When I commenced the work, I had no idea what a rich store of treasure my Ammergau investigations would open up; I may safely say that I found more than I sought for. I have not only endeavoured to do justice to the modern part of the subject, but also first and foremost to investigate the historical sources from which the character of this remarkable people is derived. I have striven to throw a light upon Ammergau and its sacred Play from all possible points. As to whether I have succeeded, is for the reader to decide.

One thing however, I think, he will not fail to recognise, namely that the Ammergauers are a people which deserve to be taken earnestly and to be treated earnestly, and that neither they nor their Play deserve the assault and ridicule which is hurled upon them from certain quarters.

But to you, worthy Ammergau friends, may the work serve as a proof that that, which your performance is capable of producing in the hearts of mankind, extends far beyond the mere impression of a fleeting hour, that it can last, and influence a man's entire life. May the work be accepted by you as a token of love and friendship, as a proof of sincere attachment to you and your sacred cause!

When my children shall have grown up, they shall realise with pride that Ammergau blood runs in their veins. And may you never forget what you owe to the sacred tradition of your race, to yourselves and to your own interests.

Munich—Oberammergau.

May 20th 1900.

HERMINE DIEMER,

née von Hillem.

INDEX.

	Page
I. A Modern Pilgrimage	1—28
II. The Village of the Passion Play and its Environs	29—44
III. History of the Village of Oberammergau	45 - 86
IV. The Evolution of the Passion Play and Text	87 - 128
V. Three Heroes of the Passion Play	129 - 149
VI. The Music of the Passion Play	150—154
VII. Passion Play Actors of the Past	155 - 170
VIII. Veterans of the Passion Play	171—190
IX. Oberammergau of To-day	191—206
X. „The Passion“	207—252
XI. Pictures of the Passion Play	253 -269



A Modern

Pilgrimage.

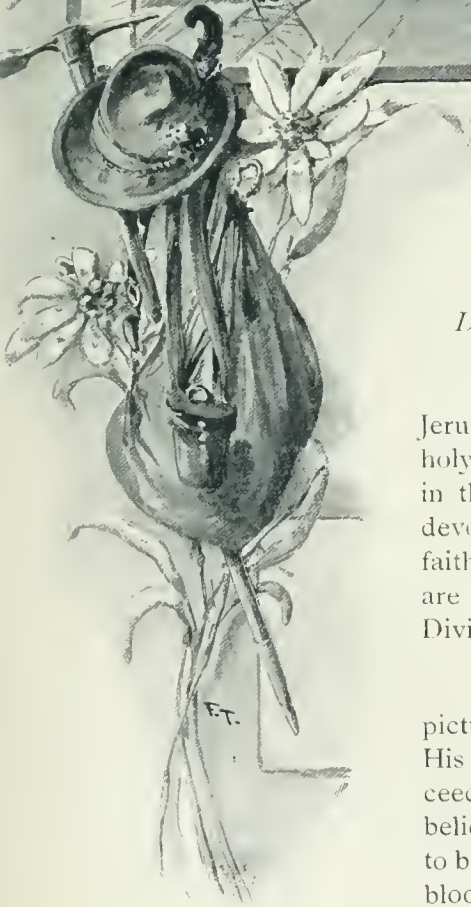
Wherever you may come from, whoever you may be, kind Reader, will you follow me? —

Whether you hail from Germany's northern plains, from far-off seas and distant lands, come roam with me awhile. A guiding star, though unseen, is above us;

which leads to where in a peaceful village the passion flowers, nurtured by long centuries of tradition, are blossoming — to where the Wonder of Wonders passes before our very eyes: the *Suffering, Death, and Resurrection of our Redeemer!*

We love to make pilgrimages to the holy places in Jerusalem, which His foot has trodden, that we may bring the holy form of our Lord and Saviour nearer to us; we seek Him in the temples of God not only in the spirit, our eyes rest in devotion on the pictures, which artists, inspired by religious faith, have painted. In art-galleries too, we seek Him, and are happy when we find in His countenance traces of the Divine.

So let us go then, to where something more than a picture, to where His figure, appears living and moving, where His voice is heard gentle and sorrowful, as it may have proceeded from His mouth 19 centuries ago! And as, to the true believer, the wonder-working pictures of Christ appear to begin to bleed, so here, the artificial blood becomes in truth the heart's-blood of the Redeemer. The soul is moved to tears of repen-



tance, and all that was obscure before, now becomes intelligible. The soul, with the repentant sinner, clings to the foot of the cross, never to leave it again. These are the effects produced on the soul by simple human means, in this representation of the Sufferings of Christ.

The thought was engendered in the sincere faith of a vigorous and earnest mountain people, and received its form in naive yet noble art, such as is produced by the believing mind of simple, deep-feeling natures. In this representation, the spirit of Him who is from everlasting to everlasting, breathes upon us, and this ancient custom of 200 years standing, this fervent piety of the people, spreads its beneficent influence over us.

Let us then go thither, to this beautiful favoured land, where glorious mountain scenery is the cradle of an upright, steadfast and capable race, among whom religion and loyalty go hand in hand, with a vigour which is hereditary, and with a strict adhesion to tradition.

Suppose we make the beautiful capital of Bavaria our starting point.

I can never pass the splendid buildings in Munich, nor see the Propyläen stand out in the golden sunset of an evening sky, without thinking of the good and great King Ludwig I.

How many a time has not the longing soul gone forth, out of every day surroundings, to these classical monuments; how many a time has not the spirit, weary and worn by the noise of traffic, and continual toil, found refreshing strength in the poetry infused into the dull life of the city by the creations of this king.

Do you know, you his grandchildren, who so often wander thoughtlessly through the streets of your native town, how much you owe to your great art patron and king, who caused all that was great and noble, and every inspiration of his artistic mind to be embodied in the buildings of his capital — at that time so insignificant, — who planted the art structures of Italy and Greece under an inclement northern sky, who brought up his people to esteem and appreciate art; and ended his life, he a royal potentate, in renouncing dominion and power with the resignation and calm of a philosopher?

You will perceive, dear Reader, that the penitential garb of a pilgrim is unnecessary in order to put you in a right mood for the representation of Golgatha. Everywhere, but more especially in the beautiful, gay capital, you will be met by the change and transitoriness of all things earthly, the ingratitude of the world and its inconstancy. You will find tombs of martyrs, on the throne, and in the world of art; who passed away misunderstood by contemporaries, in grievous disappointment and bitter sorrow; upon whose graves posterity repentingly lays the laurels so long withheld. Three tombs of Bavarian sovereigns I will mention, which we must see, for we shall often come across memorials of them in our pilgrimage. Ludwig der Bayer, in the Cathedral of our Lady; Ludwig I., in the beautiful Basilica St. Boniface; and Ludwig II., in the Church of St. Michael. And having paused at the tombs of these three sorely-tried monarchs of our Bavarian Royal House, to reflect awhile over the changes of this world, we will return thanks — either in the solemn Cathedral Church, or in the gorgeous Basilica, — to Almighty God, who in the tran-



King „Ludwig I.“
and some of his finest monuments.

sitoriness of all things earthly, has given us an eternity; for he is with us from generation to generation.

It is not for me to enumerate the lions of our city, for which purpose it is better to procure a guide-book. Let us then leave the handsome city behind us, and journey with the early train towards the mountains, at this moment, so wonderfully illumined. Behind us, rising out of a cloud of grey dust and vapours of smoke, the towers seem to bid us a last good-bye; in front lie the mountains in a blue haze, as it were promising help to us. — I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills. — Once fairly out of the large terminus, we pass the newly erected «Villa Colony Pasing». Newly built houses in modern-mediaeval style of architecture greet us with their shining roofs, sparkling in the sun. But we hurry past this picture of a growing suburb. The next station is Planegg, with its charming pilgrimage-chapel Maria-Eich. In the middle of a wood, beneath old oaks, it stands, sheltering a wonder-working picture of the Virgin Mary. The little grey-roofed chapel shows up cheerfully to the view, amidst its green surroundings, and an atmosphere of perfect peace seems to reach us from the forest, and from the holy relic. From Planegg the railway runs along the side of the beautiful valley of the Würm, the oldest cultivated portion of Upper Bavaria. At the next station, Gauting, the old Roman road, which crosses the valley, is still to be seen, and we know that the valley of the Würm with its placidly flowing water had long been inhabited, at a time when the wild Isar, then a boisterous mountain river knowing no bounds, had transformed the whole Isar Valley, by its inundations, into a wilderness of shingle, in which appeared no trace of the hand of man, or even any signs of vegetation. Here in the Würm Valley, just where the mossy stones of the ruin Karlsberg jut out, Charlemain

is, according to the legend, said to have been born. True it is, that the Karolinger had hunting grounds in this neighbourhood, and Pipin, with his family and retinue, was often here. The place Piping, not far from Pasing, traces its name back to King Pipin. At Gauting we make a very short stop, and are soon off again on our way to Mühlthal; here is a longer stay; blue liveried servants are waiting for some one; the station officials bow, and out of the train, affably raising his hat, steps a man of prepossessing appearance.

We are in luck's way; we happen to see Prince Ludwig, Bavaria's



Exter's «Villa Colony» Pasing.



Maria Eich.



future king, who is getting out here to drive to his charming castle Leutstetten, where, devoted to nature and study, he lives the life of a country gentleman, surrounded by his family. In addition to artistic tastes, the love of nature and the simple pleasures of home life are hereditary in all the Bavarian sovereigns. A group of healthy children surrounds the Prince and Princess, and among them the heir to the throne—Prince Rupprecht, born 1869—distinguishes himself in seriously pursuing his studies, and exhibiting a lively interest for science.

A little farther on we come to the Lake of Starnberg. Since time immemorial up to the present day, it has played

village of Starnberg, a favorite place for excursions, and a summer resort of the Munich people. It was once a little fishing village under the supreme rule of the



Prince Ludwig of Bavaria
from a photo by Adam Baumann
Photographer to the Court.

a part in the history of Bavaria. In pre-historic times, the beautiful lake was a glacier, which extended from the Tyrol down to the valleys of Upper-Bavaria, and on its back bore into these parts erratic blocks of Tyrolese origin. On the shores are still to be seen such-like mighty blocks of granite, the stone of which, being totally different from the calcareous stone of the Bavarian mountains, indicates glacier boulders. All the hills too at Gauting and Mühlthal are originally moraine. We stop at the charming

Counts of Starnberg; and upon its ruined stronghold the present castle stands.

Crowds of people hustle along, mostly Munich excursionists, who are taking advantage of the fine day. The bell rings, the signal is given, and off the steamer



Starnberg.



Saloon steamer Luitpold on the Lake of Starnberg.

to think about it, for the train is moving on again. So the only thing we can do is to sit at the window and look out. Thoughts of times gone by crowd upon us, reminding us of the fate of all things earthly: « Memento mori. »

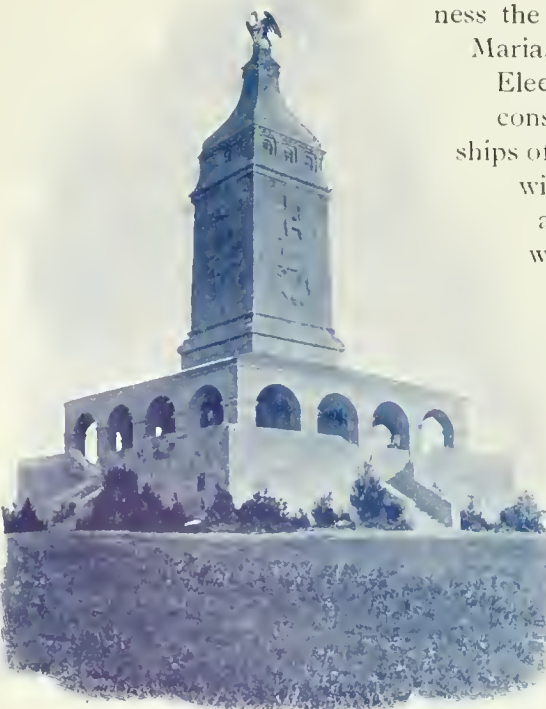
Here on the smooth surface of

Luitpold starts; our eyes, almost enviously, follow it as it cuts its way through the deep blue water this breezy sunshiny morning, towards the mountains. If we had only thought of it, we could have got out of the train at Starnberg, going on afterwards by the noontide train. And then we too should have been able to enjoy a trip on the steamer, and should have had time to go all round the lake. But alas! it is too late



The Bavarian «Bucentaur» on the Lake of Starnberg from an engraving in Wening's Topographia Bavaria.

the lake, which the steamer, indifferent to everything around it, is ploughing, thousands of holiday-making people flocked to witness the gorgeous festivities held by the Elector Ferdinand Maria. In gaily decorated ships, they rowed round the Elector's magnificent vessel, the Bucentaur, which was constructed exactly after the model of the coronation ships of the Doges of Venice. 100 ft. long, 20 ft. high, 15 ft. wide, with three decks, one over the other, it could easily accommodate 500 people. Brilliant displays of fireworks were sent off, sea-fights arranged, in a word, on all sides of the lake the noise of feasting and merry-making resounded. After the death of the Elector Ferdinand Maria, these gay times came to an end. On the site of the charming country-seat, Elector Max Joseph afterwards erected a church. The Bucentaur was laid aside. A dull matter-of-fact time began its reign. History had written its « Mene Tekel », by degrees the conscience of Germany began to awaken, and a great rising of the people was slowly, almost imperceptibly preparing.



Bismarck Monument.

And look, what is that glittering over there on the ridge of those far-stretching hills? A tower, on the top of which a golden eagle glistens. It is a monument, that a portion of the Bavarian nation has erected to the founder of our unity, to the Imperial Chancellor Bismarck. Gaze upon it, Traveller, you who are journeying through the beautiful country Bavaria — and who fancies to have come in Bavaria across the abode of all that is anti-German, look up to the eagle glittering in the sunshine, and you will know that Bavarians too are German with heart and soul, and that they are fully aware of what the honour of the German nation expects of them.

The roof of a little chapel, jutting out of those green trees over there, calls upon us to do honour in silence to the memory of a Bavarian Prince, whom we can never forget. His monument is not to be found on the heights, but deep down in the hearts of his people.

And as an open wound, ever painful, ever sore, the recollection of the tragic death of King «Ludwig II» lives on. Now we can distinctly see the little chapel and we fold, unbidden, our hands in prayer; there, exactly where it stands, the unfortunate king fought his last fight, there



his body was drawn out from the waters of the lake. Here on the lake, at the «Roseninsel», following the bent of his noble mind and

inspired by true German patriotism, he formed the plan of cooperating in Germany's unity. Here too, he saw the dream of a German empire realized. And this object which his great mind had in view, he carried out with all his manly character, and with noble, unselfish devotedness. Here on the Roseninsel he did homage to the genius of Bismarck, here too he entered into close friendship with the brave Crown Prince Frederick. Poor king! You who had inherited the power of thought, love of the beautiful, the ardent creative abilities of your noble ancestors; but who lived in a period which offered no chances of realizing your grand plans to their full extent! The spirit of a time which showed its ingratitude in compelling your great ancestor Ludwig I to abdicate, has driven you to your death — you who



Tutzing.

did not possess such resignation as his. In your capital you would find a temple dedicated to art, a home of German art, where the heroes of German folklore were to appear before us. The over-ruling power of ignorant subjects has demolished this king's grandest plans; thus causing his heart to become embittered. Sorely disappointed he withdrew himself from everything in connection with affairs and people at large, realizing his kingly visions in the sublime scenery of the mountains. As his ancestor Ludwig the Bavarian, inspired by the poetry of Wolfram von Eschenbach, had wished to bring into existence a model of the Holy Grail, so too king Ludwig II wished to glorify the legend of the Grail poem in his castle *Neuschwanstein*. This was an amends for the happiness that life had denied him. His soul escaped from the trivialities of everyday life, which offered him nothing, into an imaginary world of art and poetry, and to the glorious, solitary mountains.

Like one of those beautiful velvety nocturnal butterflies, resting by day, he lived a life of seclusion in the land of dreams; and on bright moonlight



On the Staffel-Lake.

nights he roamed through the mountains. When it was decided to force this singular king, whose eyes had become unaccustomed to the daylight, to lead a regular, everyday kind of life, to renounce his artistic ideas, even to give up his daily habits, great inconsiderateness was brought to bear on his highly-strung temperament, and the king, rather than lead an unkingly life, sought release by death in the water of the lake. The

subduing influence of the doctor from a lunatic-asylum had lost its power over him, over one, who for years, had broken off every connection with himself and mankind.

A strange coincidence it is, that the Duchess d'Alençon — once so closely connected with him, and who had spent her sunny youth on the shores of the Lake of Starnberg, at the castle of Possenhofen — should have died a tragic death. As in the times of ancient Greece we are told that the flame divided on the funeral pile of two brothers dying in enmity, it would almost seem as if in death two hostile elements had raged between the separated couple once betrothed: King Ludwig died in water, his former bride in fire, at the burning of the Charity Bazaar in Paris, 1897.

Passing by Possenhofen and Feldafing, we reach *Tutzing*, the beautiful situation of which, offers a splendid view of the lake and mountains. Tutzing has charming villas, and may certainly be considered one of the most delightful spots on the Lake of Starnberg. Here the line branches off to Penzberg, Kochel, then we ascend towards Weilheim on the high moor, which near Diemendorf forms the water-shed between the Ammer and the Würm. From this point the panorama of the mountains arises in unexpected grandeur. Especially the *Karwendel* and *Wetterstein* mountains stand out in all their ruggedness. Soon the line descends again into the valley of the Ammer. We see in the distance the charming *Ammer Lake*, *Diessen*, *Castle Pühl* and in front

of us the *Bavarian Rigi*, the

Hohle Peissenberg,

from here though,

certainly rather

insignificant. At

Weilheim our

train joins on

to the Augsburg

via Me-

ring train,

which runs di-

rect to Weil-

heim without

touching at

Munich. At

Weilheim we

have to stop,

and we spend



Murnau.

the time, do not be shocked dear Reader — it is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous — eating hot sausages. Weilheim is a very ancient, conservative, town. I wonder if it is to be attributed to this fact that its famous sausages, which pilgrims have patronized for centuries, have preserved their customary size and quality?

You may perhaps smile, gentle Reader, over my frivolous propensities, but just experience for once in your life what it is to crawl along on a gloomy day in autumn, when no quick trains happen to run, and the whole country is enveloped in a thick fog, when all traffic is at a standstill, and the very engine seems weary of existence — creep along on such a day in a slow train for four long hours to Oberau, and then you will realize what a flash of light in the grey fog, what an oasis in the desert, this station Weilheim with its comforting, historical sausages is.

From Weilheim we journey on past the very ancient village Polling, with its convent dating from the eighth century. A second line branches off to Peissenberg, which crossing the Ammer, leads to the coal mines of this district. But we run high above it up the incline to the so-called Westerleiten. Passing the ancient little village of Huglfing (Huguolfing) and Uffing, we run up a steep gradient towards Murnau. Just before this station we pass the charming Staffel Lake with its numerous islands, this too is of historical interest, where traces of pile-buildings are to be found. Behind it are the slopes of the Ammer mountains, the Hörnle at Kohlgrub, Aufacker, Ettaler Mandl, Laber, farther beyond, the Wetterstein and Ester ranges, with the Heimgarten and Herzogsstand, still farther on to the left, the Benediktenwand, and behind us to the right, the Hohe Peissenberg, presenting itself most favourably to the view.

Murnau a pretty little town, highly situated, forms as it were the entrance-gate to the mountains, and in summer is the resort of many visitors. From here we may chose two ways, for although *many* ways lead to Rome, only few lead to the Village of the Passion-Play. If we decide upon taking the one to the right, then we shall go by the Kohlgrub-Unterammergau line, which is worked partly by electricity, partly by steam, and during the summer of the Passion-Play is in direct connection with the Murnau line. This line has only been opened since the Spring. When we come to consider the natural difficulties of the soil which have been overcome

in a masterly manner, it is probably one of the finest technical achievements of the present time. It varies from other like enterprises in that, having been built to the gauge of the Bavarian State Railway, it can thus be traversed by the carriages of the same, and then in addition to this it is one of the first German railways working with rotary current.

Highly interesting is the generating station near Altenau in the so-called Kammerl, which with its works, surrounded by such lovely scenery, is one of the sights of the neighbourhood. The line, which throughout has its own independent permanent way, has rather considerable gradients to contend with. The steepest has a rise of 3% (i. e. 3 yds. in every 100) and that continues for 6 kilometres. The highest point of the line, 876 m. above sea-level, and 184 m. above the station Murnau, is at Kohlgrub and Saulgrub. The necessary power for the working of the line is obtained from a water-power station on the Ammer.



Commerzienrat O. I. Kummer,
Constructor of the electr. railway,
Murnau-Kohlgrub-Oberammergau.

When we come to consider what it means, forcing into the mountain strongholds, with their hostile forces, landslips and avalanches, the all-subduing net-work of electric currents, then we must conceive a deep respect for the intellect which has extended its schemes with infallible assurance, even over intractable nature. Herr Commerzienrat Kummer, the originator of this work, is the son of the famous Dresden landscape painter, and was for a long time naval engineer, and as such directed his energies to our young fleet. On leaving the Civil Service he became a civil engineer, soon however turned his attention to electrical engineering,

and then became representative of Messrs. Siemens and Halske. Now he is the proprietor of one of the greatest electrical undertakings, which has scarcely its equal, and as such can look back upon an honourable and successful career in Bavaria.

Such is the influence of the advent of the Passion Play on mankind and the elements. The inventive genius of a highly gifted engineer has even compelled the electric current — Prometheus' fire — to carry crowds of people over hill and dale, and across jagged rocks, into a peaceful mountain village at the foot of the cross. In less than three quarters of an hour from Murnau, we are in Ammergau. Truly, ingenious as is the mind that has planned all this, mighty as is the force of the flowing current, which brings mountains and valleys together, — yet what strikes me as the

most marvellous thing of all is the soul-stirring idea, which brings traffic into these peaceful mountain regions, which makes such enormous undertakings necessary, and which enables the same to be self-supporting during the 10 intervening years.

On this route we pass close to the prettily situated «Jägerhaus», from where a splendid view of the entire surrounding neighbourhood is to be had. Here in former times was the Convalescent Home of the monks of Ettal, until the secularization of the monastery. Artistic wooden ceilings, gothic doorways in the roomy apartments, bear witness to these times. But instead of convalescent Benedictines, robust people, with all the exuberance of youth, now inhabit the old house. Music and song ring out, the feet of little children trip up and down stairs, and should you be privileged to obtain admission to this clausure, do not be surprised, if from all corners of the house, little wights, elves, and gnomes appear, who bring you back, bit by bit, happy reminiscences of your own childhood. You are transferred



The Meggendorfers at «Jägerhaus».



Oberammergauers on the occasion of a Masquerade at Lothar Meggendorfer's farm «Jägerhaus», 1899.

to the happy days of your youth, you begin to play with the youngsters, and contemplating, you forget time and space. Now the man who has filled the old house, once the abode of lonely monks, with mirth and song, family-bliss and childish light-heartedness, is Herr Lothar Meggendorfer, the music-loving illustrator. Who among you is not familiar with his works? What parent's or child's heart has

not leapt for joy at the sight of one of Meggendorfer's picture-books, with its wealth of poetry and rich breezy humour, with such naive sense for everything sympathetic to the age of childhood! Who would not love the man, who provides our little ones with so much pleasure, who in his comic papers has supplied the entire world with a store of healthy amusement! No one would ever imagine, knowing him only from his writings, what a serious philosopher of life this jovial humourist is.

From the bustle and hum-drum of life in a big city, he has retired with his family into the mountains. Here he farms his land with his own hand, and tends his cattle. After having risen before day-break, followed the plough, sown his oats and cut his barley, he turns — replenished with the air of the morning, and bright sunshine — to the regular day's work at his writing-desk, at a time when other people are only just getting up. And now by means of brush, pencil and scissors, those little works of wonder for children and grown-up people appear, which unfortunately no reproduction is able to render in their full charm. The evening is devoted to music, to which end a lively intercourse is kept up with the neighbouring Ammergau. It can sometimes happen though, that in the middle of a Beethoven trio the master or mistress is called away to the stables, to welcome a calf upon its entrance into life. But this in no way disturbs the even tenor of affairs, for nobody better understands combining the real man in his natural state with the noblest sentiments of mind and heart, than Meggendorfer.

«What funny people these Germans are!» I hear you remark dear English Reader, and you will own that original personalities do not thrive in English fog only, for with us they owe their existence not to humours alone or any egoistic addiction to the eccentric, but generally to a recognition of the conditions under which we exist. How many men know nothing whatever of these conditions, which would keep them mentally and physically fresh — how many know of them, but do not dare to live according to the same, be it from lack of freedom, or from fear of what the world would say.

Once past the «Jägerhaus» we soon reach beautiful *Stahlbad Kohlgrub* (Faller & Buchmüller's Bad Hotel), whose comfortably furnished bathing establishment

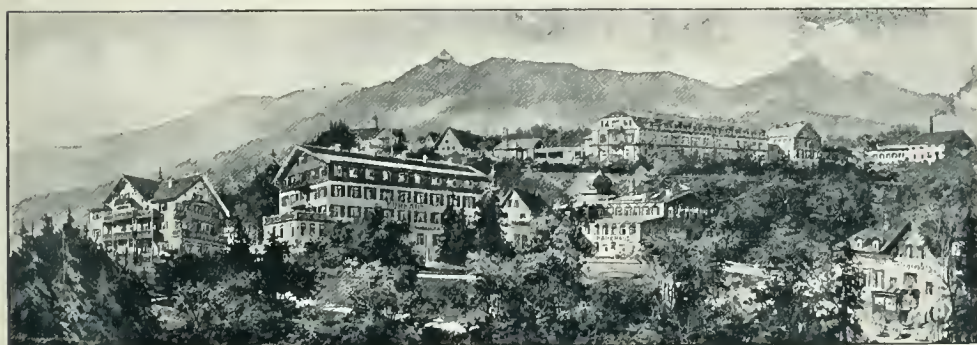
and hotel looks down upon us from above. Few baths combine splendid mountain air with medicinal springs, country privacy with modern comforts, to the extent that Kohlgrub does.

Kohlgrub in the year 1315 still belonged to the communes of Ober- and Unterammergau, Ettal and Baiersoyen. Not till later did it become an independent parish, dissolving all connection with the Ammergauers, who frequented the convent-school of Ettal.



Kohlgrub village.

While the latter devoted themselves to artistic pursuits and trade, the villagers of Kohlgrub were, in the true sense of the word, peasants, and have remained as such up to the present day.



Bad Kohlgrub.

We approach Unterammergau through the villages *Saulgrub* and *Altenau*, which in addition to farming and cattle breeding, carries on an extensive trade in grindstones. The quarries — high up on the mountain — from which these stones are obtained, are visible from a great distance. In winter-time the stones are packed on hand-sledges and sent down — not without danger to life — along narrow shoots to the valley, into the exceptionally picturesque ravine where



Unterammergau.



Grinding-Mill at Unterammergau.

the grinding-mill is situated. There they are then formed into grindstones and sent by the village people into all parts of the world.

Above the edge of the ravine, in open meadow ground, begins the once well-kept road leading to the royal hunting-lodge on the «Püschling» which King «Ludwig II» had built at great expense, in order to be able to drive to his favorite spot, which he often did in the deepest snow. Then a whole army of road-makers was put to work to shovel away the snow in all haste, at least, so much of it, that the king's carriage could pass without obstruction.

The hunting-lodge is airily situated on a narrow rocky peak of the ridge of the Sonnenberg, with a magnificent view. From here you get a fine bird's-eye view: at our feet the Castle of Linderhof; in the distance the richly wooded upper valley of the Ammer, terminating in the



Oberammergau with the theatre.

Geierköpfen : to the south the lonely Ellmau-valley, beyond which rises the wild majestic Zugspitz. Of all the easy mountain excursions in this neighbourhood, that to the Püschling is the most repaying. King «Ludwig II» used to come as far as Unterammergau in his carriage, and in the meadow at the end of the village, he got into a little chaise, which was drawn by two strong horses at a smart trot up the mountain.



From Unterammergau we could get to the Passion village in 10 minutes. There, where to the right the Kofel, to the left the Passion theatre stands out, is the railway station — just before you get into the village. With that I have described the route, but we will however not take it until our return.

And now having left behind us in Murnau the big, clumsy engine of the State Railway, and entrusted ourselves to the powerful little engine of the branch line, we will travel on via *Hechendorf*, *Ohlstadt*, *Eschenlohe* to the station Oberau. The construction of this line was associated with enormous difficulties, for the marshy soil between Murnau and Eschenlohe made the laying down of the line almost impossible at first, as every foundation sank immediately into the bog.

Eschenlohe too, is an old historic village, and most prettily situated. It formerly belonged to the Counts of Eschenlohe. It possesses a fine Mount of Calvary, is too especially worth mentioning, because from here, as soon as ever the village is behind you, you get a splendid view of the Zugspitz. From Eschenlohe onwards, we walk along the bank of the Loisach, which, coming from the Tyrol, flows towards us on its way from lovely Garmisch. From here the valley

becomes more picturesque.

Right and left, high rocky walls enclose the line and as up to the present we only saw the mountains from a distance we now get an insight into the intricate details of the mighty mountain giants.

At last we



Oberau.



View of a
portion of the new
Ettal mountain road.

reach Oberau. Here the numbers of carriages waiting for the «Passion Pilgrims», attract our attention.

In Oberau the «*Mauthhaus*» still stands, where formerly toll was paid when entering the demesne of Werdenfels. The village is picturesquely situated on the Loisach, and extends as far as «Unterm Berg», into the mountain gorge. Here three roads branch off; to Ettal and Oberammergau, to Partenkirchen and Garmisch and to Eschenlohe and Weilheim. Here too is a fine Mount of Calvary, with interesting stations of the Cross, and a Crucifixion group carved by *Andreas Lang sen.* and well worth-seeing. On the summit, in addition to the little church, is also the village burial-ground, the exposed position of which, high up on a tiny plateau, reminds one vividly of the customs of those savages, who

place their dead on trees. Oberau is also the birthplace of Geistlicher Rath *Daisenberger*, the re-modeller and re-writer of the text of the Passion

Play. It is a well-to-do village with handsome houses. At «Unterm Berg», where the old road to Ettal ascends, the energetic and inventive Herr Kienzerle has erected a Cellulose and Paper Factory, and turned the 200 year-old hostelry «Unterm Berg» into a charming, artistic, and comfortable home. We will get something to eat at the excellent Post Inn, then mount our conveyance — obtained with difficulty — and drive towards the mountain.

The road, which now leads from Oberau to Ettal, is one of the loveliest mountain routes in Bavaria, perhaps in all Germany. Broad and easy, it winds in huge zig-zags up the hillside, rising with moderate gradients to a height of 250 metres. To the left, you look down straight into the corner «Unterm Berg»; deep gullies, steep precipices, are along this side of the road. Slender buttresses rise from below up to the handsomely arched stone-bridge, ensuring a free course to the water, which comes down from the mountain. Whoever passes by, when the snow begins to melt, can hear the water roaring and thundering down from above. The torrent dashes in foaming curves, or flows in winding channels, down the gorge, and away under the bridge. We see it as it hurries down from the mountains, and loses itself in the cutting under the road, to appear again on the other side, and finally vanish over a precipice.

But there is also plenty of water here in midsummer. Everywhere we see from the neighbouring mountains, the rivulets — the mountain's tears — trickling down from eyes of stone, fringed by the dark eyelashes of the pine trees.

High up yonder, the range of the Wetterstein shines forth in eternal peace. Yet in spite of all the beauty, which meets us here, and which we shall be able to enjoy to the full higher up, I propose sending up our carriage with the driver, and for us to walk up the old road to where the new one rejoins it, which it does about three quarters of the way up.

It is no longer kept in repair, and strictly speaking, there is now no thoroughfare, because stones occasionally fall down, causing danger to life; but it is so out of the ordinary and so picturesquely overgrown, and the rocky boulders too lying about in all directions are covered with quantities of strawberries. And now, dear Reader, consider, that this road, in former times called the «Kienberg», was up to the year 1888, the only approach to Ettal and Oberammergau, so that, before and even after the introduction of the railway, the heavily laden market carts, driving through Oberau-Oberammergau to Augsburg, were obliged to climb this terribly steep mountain-track. This being the case, the Oberauers did a good business with relay-horses. At the inn «Unterm Berg», there was always a number of powerful horses, with muscles like the old war steeds of the Middle Ages, standing ready. Of these huge animals from two to four, as required, were put to the cart, which was bound with chains, so that it should not break asunder, and then away you went, straight as a dart, up the hill. I well remember what a frightful impression it made on me when in the year 1880 coming from Walchensee, and wanting to get to the Passion Play, we stopped at «Unterm Berg» in pouring rain, and deliberated how we should best get up this road reaching into the clouds.

We could not expect much more from our horses, for they had been on the go all day long. To their great surprise they were finally unharnessed, and were allowed to practise mountaineering at their own sweet will. On to the front of our vehicle came four of these Cyclopean monsters, the rattling chains were drawn under the axle-trees, and we slowly moved on up the hill amid continual shouting at the horses, and resting every now and again. The rain poured down round about us, the brooks foamed and gurgled, and the carriage rocked and creaked in all its joints, the chains clattered, and when we looked out in front through the carriage-windows, we saw the leading horses high above us, behind them only the heads of the others.

If we were not so firmly convinced that the way to hell leads downwards, we should, under these circumstances, have believed ourselves on the way rather to hell than to heaven. The state of things during the time of the play however was truly awful, when hundreds of carriages one behind the other had to ascend the hill, and still worse when they had to descend again. Getting by was out of the question; as the carriages got into line, so they had to remain, up one side and down the other. How often it happened that during the descent a light one-horse conveyance could not be held in, and breaking out of the row, caused general confusion. Of course the other animals wanted to start off too, and could scarcely be kept in hand; ladies screamed, the coachmen swore and the runaway carriage brushed so closely past the other carriages as to almost graze the wheels, till finally lower down horse, carriage and coachman lay all doubled up in a heap.

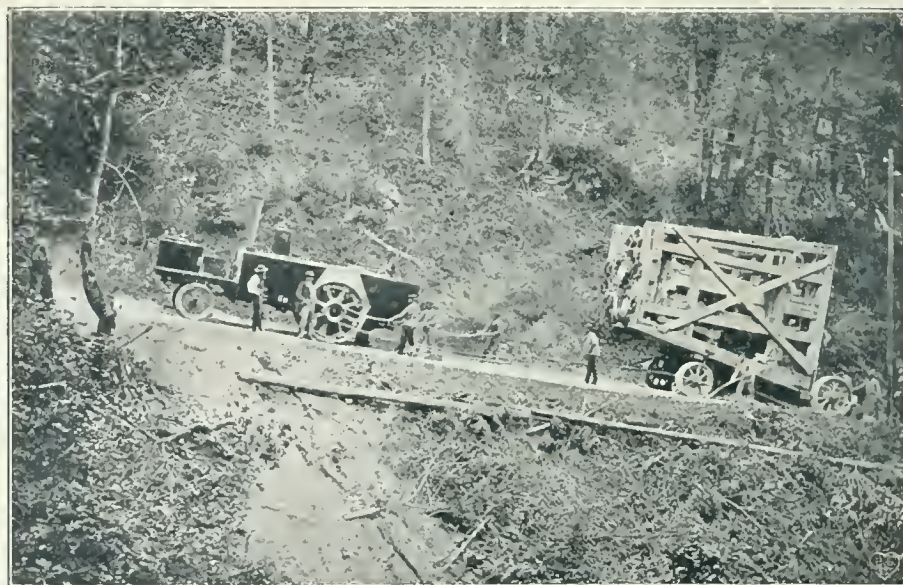


Such occurrences were frequent, and you could thank your lucky stars if you escaped with a whole skin.

About half way up, stands a black obelisk, which is also visible from the new road. It is to record a dreadful catastrophe, caused by the steepness of the mountain. When in 1875, the heavy Crucifixion group, which King «Ludwig II» had presented to the Oberammergauers, was to be brought to the place of erection, the heavy load had likewise to be dragged up the old road, the «Kienberg»; Ludwig the Bavarian rode this same way when he journeyed, into the valley of the Ammer with the figure of the Virgin Mary, to find a suitable site for the erection of a monastery.

The heaviest piece of the group, the stone Cross, had already been drawn up the mountain by a traction engine, and the all too energetic stonemason Hauser, the director of the transport, would not wait until the engine returned from Oberammergau to fetch the figure of St. John. He attempted the transport of the colossus with half a hundred horses. In the treacherous hollow, the so-called «Long Hollow», the waggon, pulled more on the one side than the other by the horses, turned over and crushed Hauser and his assistants who were walking alongside.

And yet in spite of all dangers and terrors, whatever happened there, the old road still retained its magic charm. First of all the sacred breath of tradition hovers over it, and there is a rustling in the dead leaves like the soft woeful steps of departed souls. These rocks have seen him, — the great Emperor with the true German heart, — as he rode along in deep meditation, bearing the peace and blessing which he wished to bestow on his country Bavaria. When the weary merchant returned home from distant lands to these shady woods, he would stop to take breath on the



Transport of the Crucifixion group on the old Ettal road.

steep road so familiar to him, and with a sigh of emotion on seeing his native soil once more, would revel in the sweet smelling pine trees and rustling sounds in the woods of his mountains. Then the old road was too, in spite of its steepness, much pleasanter to go by, because it was considerably shorter. A good walker could easily cover the distance in half an hour. And such a place had also a peculiar adventurous attraction, when every time you wished to ascend and descend the dangerous route you felt you must utter a short prayer, and you asked your-



Ettaler Mandl.

self: Shall I ever reach home alive? In those times you thought yourself doubly lucky, if you managed to get back safe and sound. The Counts and Countesses Pappenheim, to whom, until quite recently, Ettal belonged, whenever they wanted to go up the hill, had a pair of their handsome white oxen brought to Oberau as leaders, and then drove, after the fashion of the old Franconian kings, with this team up the mountain. We have now reached the place where the romantic road of the past leads into, or rather crosses, the smooth road of to-day. We will wait here for our conveyance which is still a long way behind us, for here the steepest ascent leaves off, and in a gentle trot we soon approach ancient Ettal. From the distance, the dome of the magnificent church (fast approaching its completion), greets us and from above, the « *Ettaler Mandl* » looks down in its stony calm.

*'s Ettaler Mandl is schwarz und stark
 Hat in die Knochen a stoanern's Mark,
 Kummert si nit um Wetter und Wind,
 Is a wahrhafti 's Felsenkind.*

*I will 's enks ag'n, es schaugt und sinnirt
 Was der Boar für a Leben führt,
 Ob er no brav, wie sunst und guat,
 Ob er 's no hat, sei tapfer's Blut.»*

So sings *Franz von Kobell*, a popular poet of Bavarian dialect. How this Felsenkind will rejoice when it sees how, at last, the restoration of its glorious church is nearly completed.

For a good century the beautifully carved capitals lay about among rubbish and dust in front of the church, affording the village children a resting place and play-ground. At last the day will come when the handsome stone cornices will rise from the ground, and will be hoisted up to crown the finished work. And how brightly will the «Ettaler Mandl» glow in the sunset of the departing century when, at no very distant period, it sees the familiar, serious forms of Benedictine monks return once more to the old forsaken monastery.

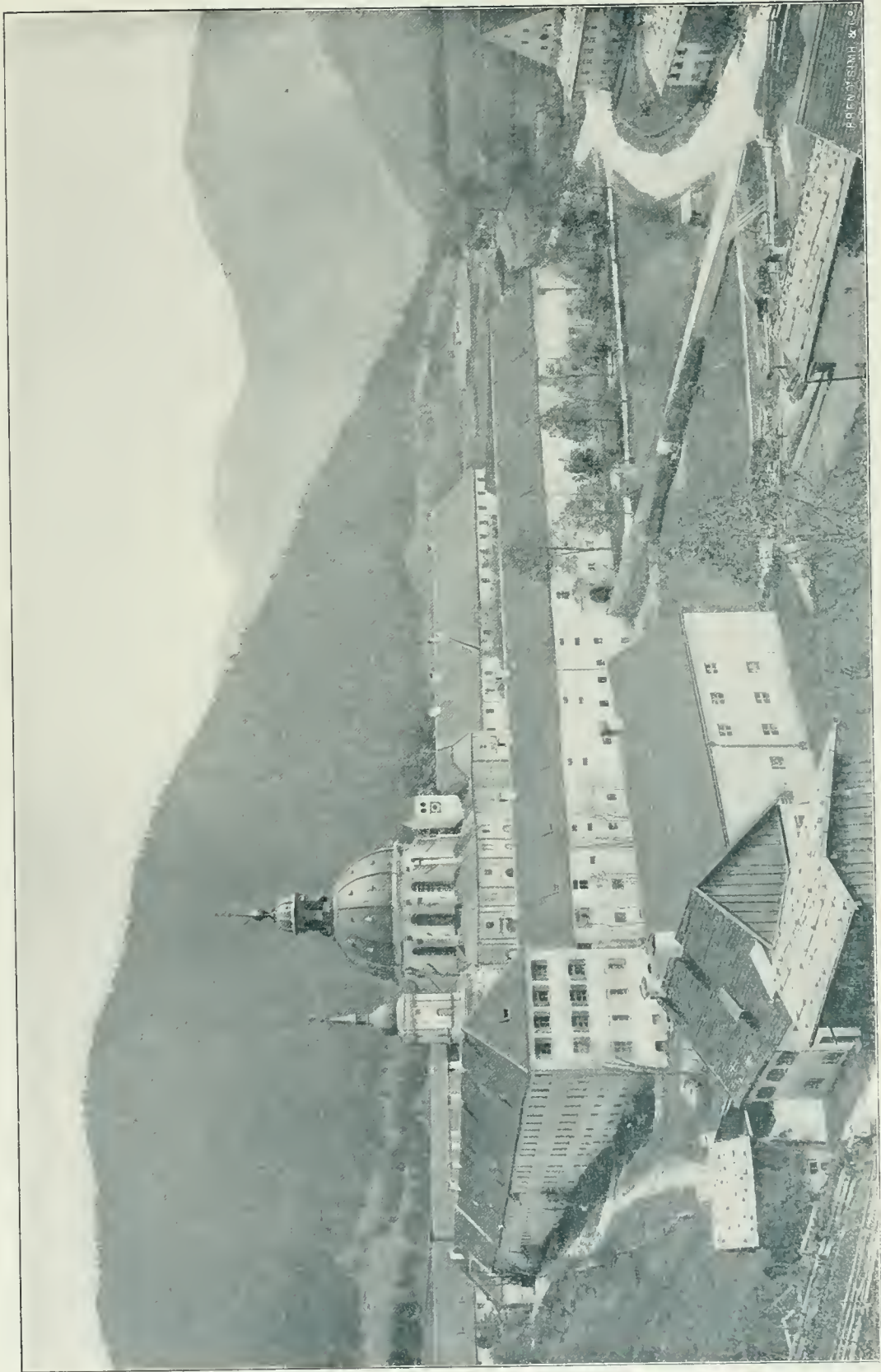


Capitals of columns
 of the old Ettal church.

To the left of the «Ettaler Mandl» are situated the Dolomites of the Laber; to the west, the peak of the Noth, and the Graswanger mountains bound the view. We tell the coachman to stop, and we step through the large gate-way into the court-yard of the convent which encloses Ettal's fine old church. The history of Ettal I will reserve till later, as it is too closely intertwined with that of Oberammergau to allow of its being treated separately.

As the holy image which, an emperor's arm devotedly bore over the Alps to found for it a home here in the wilderness, has shed, over wild uncivilized tracts the blessings of faith, religion, and civilization, so Ettal too has through coming into existence, to a certain extent given life and breath to the neighbouring villages.

We now enter the church. As it now stands there are only a few details of the original work of the great Emperor Ludwig, which he began in 1330. Of that votive church scarcely anything remains except the foundation and the



Ettal.



Convent church of Ettal.

the Jesuits, at that time in its prime, now held full sway in the church, and a new art-creation arose from the ruins of the old building. Certainly the foundation remained the same, the twelve-sided plan has been kept to, the old three-pillared buttresses still surround and support the rotunda, and we can easily reconstruct in imagination the simple roof of the original minster out of the noble dome of the central transept. It is the fine fully developed matron in whose ripe figure it is easy to recognize the delicate outlines of the maiden. It has always appeared to me a marvellous thing, that the art of the builder can create upon the same ground-plan and using the material at hand, a perfectly new work, and yet still retain the characteristics of the old. Like a tree which remains a tree and yet changes in summer and winter, so the original idea still shines through the work of

principal walls. Conflagrations, inroads of the Swedes, and partly too of the French, had almost entirely destroyed the work of the pious Emperor; the last calamity being the fire on St. Peter's and St. Paul's Day in 1744, which left only the outside walls standing. As early as 1710, when the «Ritterakademie» was founded, they determined on rebuilding the church. One of the Conventuals, Count Joseph von Gondola, travelled in the years 1744—1750 through the kingdom, and beyond into Holland and Belgium, and collected 24,977 florins. The art of



Portal of the old Ettal church.

the Kaiser Ludwig, only that the simple roof has been transformed into a dome, the plain walls have widened out, magnificent decorations, columns, and altars have arisen, like leaves out of a bare stem, and the old idea rises in jubilant splendour from its narrowing influences. Who the first designer was, nobody really knows. According to G. F. Seidel, *Enrico Zuccali*, whose great merits are mentioned by Pater E. Sartori in his *Diarium*, probably gave the plans for the reconstruction. Trautmann avers that the architect Joseph Schmutzer of Wessobrunn, the builder of the beautiful Church of the Cross in Donauwörth, has done the greater part of it. With him is also mentioned his countryman, named Ybelhör, descendant of an ancient artist-family. Besides these, *Roman Boos* and his father-in-law *Johann Straub*, Sculptor to the Electoral Court of Bavaria, carried out the decorations of the interior. Unfortunately, before the outermost façade was finished, the secularization of



Statue of the Emperor «Ludwig the Bavarian».

This statue, «Kaiser Ludwig the Bavarian», in the possession of the firm Georg Lang sel. Erben Oberammergau, was intended for the top of the right hand tower of Ettal church. The statue is 2.70 metres high, of one piece of oak, and carried originally the «Mother of God» of Ettal in its hands. The whole statue was to have been gilded.

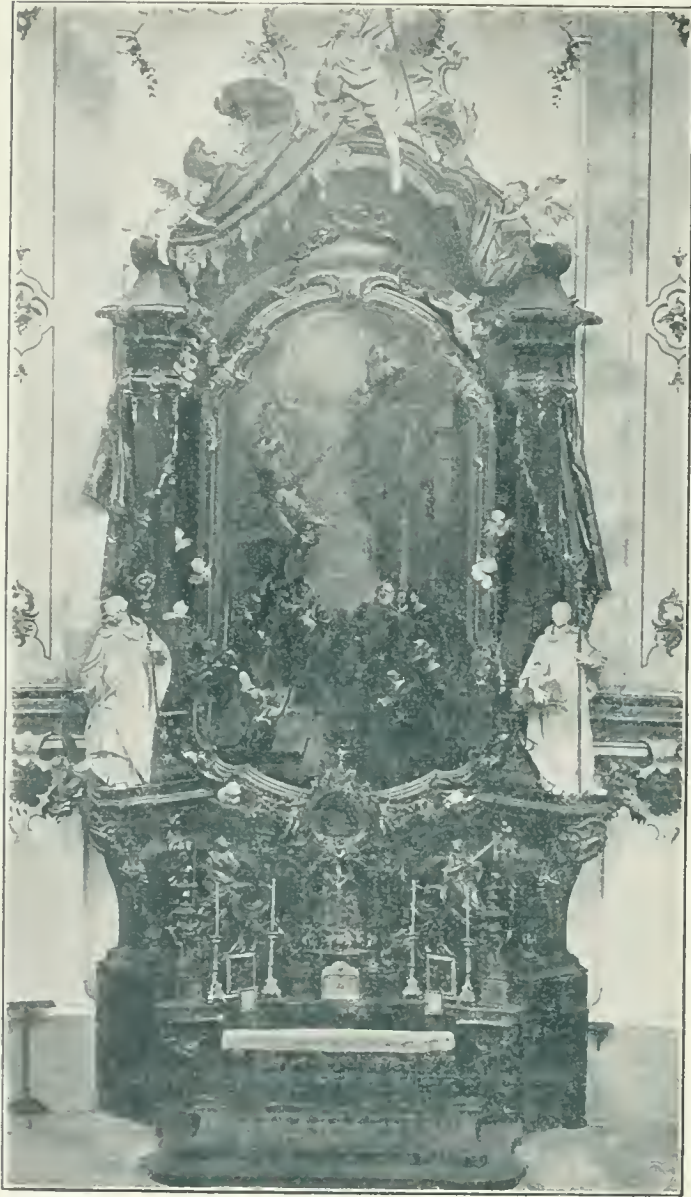
the secularization of charming details of the earliest periods with a stiff plaster, and it is reserved for our time to bring those interesting relics of a great past to light again. For instance, during the above mentioned restoration, an old gothic relief was disclosed over the principal door, and at the same time the discovery was made that the pillars of the portal were made out of the most beautifully grained Untersberger marble which, with much trouble, had been artificially roughened so that the plaster might adhere well. Who could possibly have been guilty of this vandalism? It might possibly have been the court sculptor himself. On entering the church, we take a look at the interesting relief, and then go first of all into the old gothic chapel-gallery which, with its cloisters, clearly cut and with pointed arches, forms the oldest part of the church, which dates back to the time of Ludwig the Bavarian. It is a pity that the white distemper, which is so unfavourable

the convent intervened, and the sculptor's work remained where it stood. The capitals belonging to the columns, lay moss-grown on the ground, and everything seemed to have fallen into a trance. For the space of nearly one hundred years, no hand touched the sacred edifice, until about five years ago they started the marble-quarries in the Laberberg, in order to restore the church.

It is true that the architects in the time of the Jesuits are also not entirely free from all blame.

In order to bring as much unity into the work as possible, they have covered, as with a stream of larva, a number of small

to pure gothic, should destroy the effect. And now we enter the actual interior of the sacred building; the bewildered senses hail as an ineffable wonder this feast of colour, the harmony of this artistic whole.



Benedict Altar in Ettal Church.

Wherever our eyes stray, the view is in nowise hemmed in. Our vision soars into the immeasurable space, up into the roof of the dome: «And behold, I saw the heavens open and angels ascending and descending.»

Knoller's beautiful picture shows us the heavens opened, and the Ascension of the Virgin Mary. We see the Saviour surrounded by saints going to meet her, we see the angels and heavenly hosts joining in joyful ecstacy, and we feel ourselves being carried with the jubilant throng towards our eternal home. Besides the fresco in the rotunda, Knoller has also painted five other altar pictures. The picture over the high altar which is in harmony with the dome, then the two altar pictures, *The Martyrdom of St. Sebastian*, a work of marvellous beauty, which always particularly delighted me, and *The Beheading of St. Catherine*; later is *The Holy Trinity* adored by angels, and still later a fifth *Mary with the Corpus Christi*.

Knoller was a Tyrolese of deep religious feelings. He was born 1725 in the village Steinach near Innsbruck. The fact that he decorated the little church of his birthplace with excellent pictures, bears witness to sincere devotedness. It is the power of faith which he put into his works, and which, reflected from them, produces faith in the hearts of the beholders.

Very fine too is the Benedict Altar, in the altar picture of which, the death

of St. Benedict is represented. The picture is from the brush of the Imperial and Royal Court Painter in Prague, Felix Anton Scheffler, born Aug. 9. 1701 in Bavaria, died 1760 in Prague.

And now come with me to the high altar and we will ask the affable schoolmaster, who is also the sacristan, to lift the Madonna down for us.

You perhaps, stranger, are unbelieving. You visit the church out of mere curiosity, and consider only the artistic value of the holy images. Picture to

yourself that this small, delicate, white stone figure has remained here in a strange land for six centuries, and withstood the transitoriness of all things earthly.

Does not a feeling of awe come over you, when you come to think that one of the mightiest and noblest Emperors of the German nation has, with his own arm, carried the sacred image over the Alps, from the sunny South into the inclement North, to fill here millions of hearts with the glow of devotion, and to feed the flame of faith through whole centuries?

As to its real age, it is said to have originated in the school of *Nicola Pisano*, about the middle of the 13th century. Some say it is much older and assign it to the early christian era; others again consider it to date back even before Christ and take it to be one of those Roman-Egyptian idols, representing Isis. At any rate it is of an unusual and foreign character, such as scarcely ever appears in the whole of christian art. The statue was formerly coloured, a fact to which the dark inlaid eyes and slight traces of gilding and colour on the hair and drapery still bear witness. The material of which it is made, is also highly remarkable, being of marvellous whiteness and of a peculiar transparency. A savant designates it as Indian porphyry; to me it always seemed more like a beautiful kind of alabaster. The figure diffuses an indescribable charm. The face of the mother bears such a



The Madonna of Ettal.



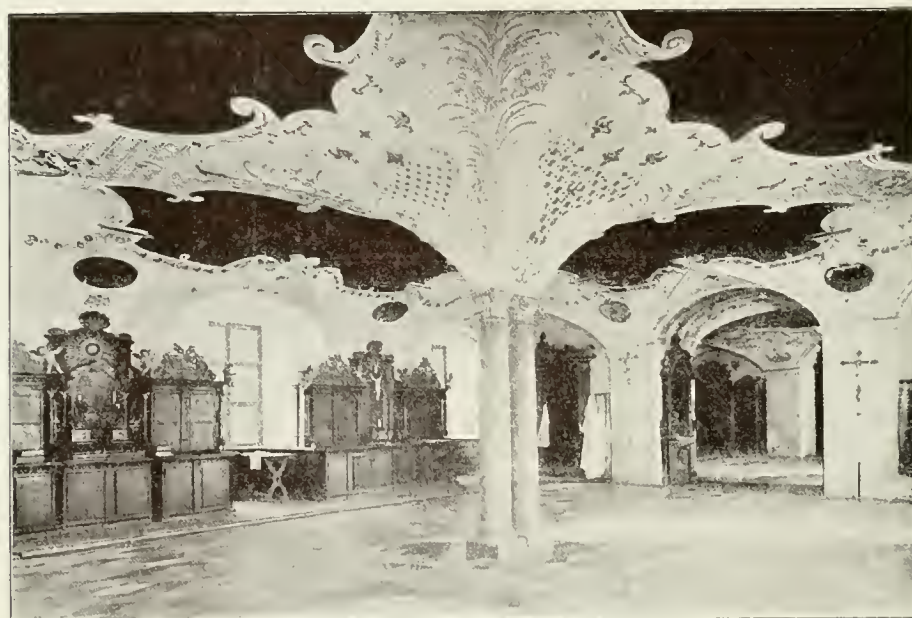
The Holy Image.

sublime and spiritual expression and that of the child is so ineffably sweet, that it may well be of supernatural origin. At all events its creator, whether christian or heathen, has glorified in it the manifestation of highest celestial beauty.

She seems to be sitting, and leaning slightly back in a low seat, and holds in one hand her dress, whilst with the other she supports the young Christ, who stands on her knee, with the hand raised as if in benediction. Unfortunately the Child is very much disfigured by

the stiff, jewelled dress. The work was restored in 1855 by Prof. Zumbusch in Munich, I must say however, that the position of the Child on the knee of the Mother was never very clear to me. The lower part always seemed to me to be too short in proportion to the upper part, which probably arises from the fact that the legs of the Child were broken short just above the feet, and in all possibility they have been shortened in the restoration.

The sacristan assures us that such as are deep in sin cannot possibly lift the figure from the altar. Of course our honour demands that we should make the attempt; we do it, and note with satisfaction that the burden of our sins has



Convent Church in Ettal. The Sacristy.

not yet weakened our arms. We now take a turn through the beautiful sacristy, with its handsome cabinets built into the wall, its artistically decorated and painted ceiling, and its lurking niches with holy water. We hear the grand organ played to us, and then leave this abode of sublime conceptions. — We turn for a moment into the neighbouring inn (*Landes*). It is five hundred years old and was built soon after the founding of the monastery. But it is getting on towards evening, and we must proceed farther, so we drive quickly away out of Ettal. As we pass by, we see a curious round building, like an old fort, or a very ancient chapel. According to some people, this was the old Ethiko Chapel, and later on, during the erection of the Ettal Church, it harboured the image of the Madonna. Not far from Ettal, the road to Graswang and Linderhof branches off, and in the evening sunlight the chain of the Graswang mountains: Scheinberg, Hochplatt etc. greet us. At the extreme end, the Klammspitz stands, then from the Graswang valley to Ammergau stretch the jagged heights of the Pürschling or Birschling, up to which an attractive hunter's-path leads. Following these, comes the Kofel, the landmark of Ammergau, a steep rock, with a cross on the top. The main

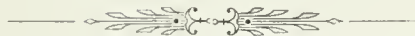
road now passes close by the Laber with its marble quarries. Here a perfect sea of rocks and stones covers the ground; it consists of marble, obtained here for the buildings of Ettal church, the huge blocks of which are trimmed and shaped straight-away in this place.

We now come to a part where the road, wedged in between the crystal-clear Ammer, and a high overhanging wall of marble (the so-called Kapellenwand) forms a sort of defile. Up in the wall to the right, is a picturesque cave known as the «Bärenloch», in the mouth of which a figure of Christ carved in wood bids the traveller welcome.

The road now makes a turn, and the pretty villa of Frau von Hillern, and the friendly church-tower of Oberammergau suddenly appear to view; we have already reached the first houses of the village — a few more yards, and we are in Oberammergau.



View of the Kofel from the *Bärenloch*.





Oberammergau.



The
Village of the Passion Play
and its Environs.

The Kofel.

At last we are in the village of the Passion Play. Near the first houses, or rather just before reaching them, we notice a bridge, which leads over the Ammer to the left. Its continuation is an even and picturesque road, which King Max II had made in the fifties, so that he could cross his hunting grounds more easily. This road leads near the delightful



Dickelschwaige near Graswang.

Dickelschwaig an old estate belonging to the Ettal monastery; then through the village of *Graswang* to *Linderhof*, and across the Tyrolese frontier to *Plansee* and *Reutte*. It is the route to Ammergau from the Tyrol. To the right stands a neat little house, the first in the village, with a picturesque garden, reaching up to the quarry in the mountain. In it lives an Ammergauer family of the purest blood: the carver Andreas Lang, the Rabbi of the Play, and his wife, the grand-daughter

Arrived at Hillernschlösschen July 29th 1900. Passion Play.

July 28th — Aunt Lottie & Jane Eno — left July 30th for Munich.

of that Diemer who was leader of the choir in 1840 and 1850. She has inherited Diemer's musical talent to a high degree, and possesses a clear voice, which makes her one of the chief supports of the choir. The children too already show a remarkable talent for music, and the quartett of these pure, fresh young voices, like the joyous song of the lark, rings out when they sing together.

in the place, where the magic of the Passion Play had taken hold on her in all its force. And now she lives summer and winter up there, the precipitous *Kofel* and the *Noth* in front of her, and in her heart an ideal to which she will remain true until the end of her life.

Farther in front, to the right, also at the foot of the Villa Hillern, is the house inhabited by «Old Rendl», the Peter of this season, the Pilate of the last, who, besides his trade of carver, also fills the post of concierge at the Villa Hillern. The next house is the *Carving School*, in which the youth of Oberammergau learns its artistic trade, under the guidance of Ludwig Lang and the drawing - master Anton Lechner. It is well worth a visit. Lovely things are made there, and it is a pleasant sight to see how keenly the youngsters work away at carving, drawing, and modelling. Thanks to the able and artistically-minded Director and the highly talented teacher, the school is fully up to the requirements of modern taste. Ludwig



Hillernschlösschen.
(Beneath, the house of Old Rendl)

Above, on a hill, the villa of *Frau von Hillern* stands out. The owner, who could not resist the bewitching influence of the Play in 1880, erected the house at considerable expense, and has now become with heart and soul an Ammergau. Of all the thousands who have viewed the Play not one has, like her, gone so far as to sever all ties with the outer world, and to settle here in the village,



«Aussergasse» in Oberammergau.

Lang also undertakes the arrangement of the tableaux in the Passion Play. We drive in through the «Aussergasse», past clean and pretty houses, with neat gardens, flowers at the windows, and brightly painted shutters. A fine house, near the church, attracts our attention. It is the «*Forsthaus*» (forester's house), the former judicial court of Ettal, which, after the abolishment of the monasteries, was offered to the Provost of Rottenbuch, Herkulan Schwaiger, as a dwelling place, and after his death in 1830, was used as the seat of the District Inspector of Forests for Ettal. The tastefully painted house is anyhow certainly one of the most interesting structures of the 18th century.



Oberammergau. Forsthaus.

Close at hand is the peaceful cemetery, through the re-arrangement of



Oberammergau. In front of the Cemetery and Church.

which in 1885 the late pastor, Anton Glonner rendered [a lasting service. Before that it was rather untidy and irregular, and consequently it was difficult to find one's way. Glonner had the graves arranged in rows, paths laid out, in short, the churchyard made into a real «Garden of God». And a cemetery in the midst of the village like this appeals to the soul. It has nothing terrifying about it, like the out-of-the-way burial-places of great towns. Here those who have gone to their rest, lie, as it were, in the heart of the community. They hear all that goes on around them; they are not forsaken [and forgotten. Every Sunday, after the morning service, the relatives come to the graves, and sprinkle them with holy



Dedler Monument
in the cemetery of Oberammergau.

likeness. That the artist has made a present of his work to his native village of Oberammergau will surprise no one who knows the love of the brave-hearted Oberammergauer for his home. Amongst other tombstones worth noticing are those of the Lang family, of Michael Diemer, in his time chairman of the District Council and Choir-leader, and of his son Johann Diemer, also a former chairman of the Council and Choragus.

A simple black cross marks the grave of the local practitioner, *Dr. Otto Koch*, who all too soon fell a sacrifice to his onerous profession. He was the son-in-law of the representer of the «Christ» in 1870—71, 1880 and 1890; and his charming young wife and three dear little children still bemoan their supporter. One could mention many resting places of faithful Ammergauers, of noble hearts and of philanthropists. But whoever visits the cemetery will read for himself very many names which he has already come across in the history of the

water, and a sorrowful but sympathetic communication is kept up between the living and those beneath. There are monuments to great and good people in the little burial-ground. In it stands the beautiful monument, erected by the community to its sons, who fell in 1870—71; a memorial service is annually celebrated here. There is also the monument, erected by pupils and friends, to the teacher *Dedler*, composer of the «Passion» music, who was born (1822) and buried in Oberföhring; further, that to the Provost *Herkulan Schwaiger*, and above all the monument to the Geistlicher Rath *Daisenberger*, the re-constructor and reviser of the text of the Play. As regards artistic merit, the last is perhaps the finest of all in the cemetery; it was made by an Oberammergauer *Otto Lang*, a prominent Munich sculptor.

Upon a simple red sandstone pedestal stands the bust of the ever memorable man, which reproduces his features with striking



Monument to Geistl. Rath Daisenberger
in the cemetery of Oberammergau.

Passion Play of Ammergau, and the neat graves will speak to him of many a silently ended life.

We will enter the church. It cannot compare in beauty with that of Ettal, but for a village church it is a fine, spacious and worthy House of God. It was



Oberammergau. Interior of the village Church with High-altar.

built on the site of the old one, then fallen into decay, in 1736—42, and was consecrated on June 17th 1749, by His Grace the Most Reverend Archbishop, *Johann Marquard*, Suffragan Bishop of Freising.

An altar here contains the bones of Saint Amandus which were sent by an Ammergauer, the Dominican *Amadeus Eyrl* from Rome to his native place through a countryman. The frescoes on the roof by M. Gindter are interesting, of which, in particular, that over the organ, representing the tabernacle of St. Peter's in Rome, has a strikingly natural effect, on account of its clever perspective. Handsome, richly gilded altars in baroque style, which have only been renovated within the last ten years, make a good impression with their fine carvings. The last few years have brought altogether many a change in the church. After the Passion Play of 1890 some English people presented the community with a splendid organ which surpasses in appearance and fullness of tone even that of Ettal.

Tasteful new, stained-glass windows, a handsome communion rail and a new peal of bells have helped in beautifying the House of the Lord. Everywhere is has been repaired, painted, gilded and decorated. The present clergy have turned out all the old pictures, votive figures, mission crosses etc. into the lumber-



Oberammergau. Interior of the Church with Organ.

room of the sacristy: even the greater part of the famous old model of the Holy Manger, which Geistlicher Rath Daisenberger mentions as an object of interest in his description of the church, fell a prey to the spirit of modern puristic style, to which unfortunately so much has been sacrificed in our Bavarian churches. It may seem strange, but since the church has been so nicely tidied up and decorated, I, and probably many others with me, have had the feeling, that it is now the Lord's «best room», which one may only enter in his best clothes, but not his

living room», where his weary children in their work-blouses, covered with the dust and dirt of toil and life, might come and find a peaceful corner, and hold quiet converse with the Almighty; where ancient carved figures of Christ, wonderfully realistic, with half-opened mouth breathing a last sigh, and compassionate Madonnas, with the sword in their hearts, seemed to say to the burdened soul:

Where is pain like unto my pain? That is all gone now. The pictures, offerings of thankfulness and pious faith, from sorely tried souls; the dark niches, with the withered wreaths, where one could pray unseen; the thousand reminders which re-



Oberammergau. Altar to St. Amandus in the Church.

called to the grandchild the joys and sorrows, the struggles and trials of his forefathers; they are all banished from the holy edifice. Are we right, in these times, which dispense so much with piety, to let this puritanical spirit rule in our churches? I doubt it, just as much as I do, the right to clear away, on the mere grounds of beauty and order, numbers of sacred relics, which have grown dear to many

a heart, and all the more so as many of these things do not even violate good taste. It is just in these old objects, the outcome of pious thought, that secret forces lie, forces increased by the spell of honourable tradition, which also influences the soul. This severity does not either really lie in the spirit of the Chatholic Church. What charming little details of small votive chapels, statues

etc. etc., and apparently not in keeping with the proper style, do we find in the magnificent classical churches of Italy and Germany. I will refer only to the many attractive details in Strassburg Cathedral. In such things lie poesy and part of the history of civilization, and when we remove them, we destroy one of the best elements of national art. I have purposely talked so fully about the matter because I hope that these words will perhaps induce influential people to assist in the preservation of many an old and sacred object in the churches.

To the north of the church lies the chief part of the village. We still see a few finely painted houses, but unfortunately the best here have been destroyed by fire. Formerly every house in the village was decorated with admirable frescoes, the work of the so-called *«Lüftmaler»* (painter in the air) the highly gifted *Franz Zwinck*, colour-grinder and apprentice to Martin Knoller when the latter was painting Ettal church. He was a clever brisk worker, and many humorous anecdotes still

exist about his quickness of execution. For instance, he is said to have once promised a peasant woman, who happened to be churning butter at the time, that he would paint a Virgin Mary on her house by the time she had finished making the butter, if she would give him the latter. And so it was; when the butter was ready, the Virgin Mary had been painted. At any rate, it is wonderful how fresh the colours



Oberammergau. View of the Church from the house of Georg Lang sel. Erben.



House of Joseph Posch, wheelwright, Oberammergau.



The house of the Mayor at Oberammergau with frescoes by Franz Zwinck.

still are, after these 120 years, and with what skill the whole is composed. W. Wyl calls him the Paul Veronese of Oberammergau, and thinks, perhaps rightly, that the art of this country Rococo-painter was a stray element of the mighty host of the art of the Renaissance which had drifted into this lonely mountain village. Zwinck reached an age of scarcely 40 years; his great-grandson Johannes Zwinck is

the Judas in this year's Play. One of the finest of the still preserved houses is that of the mayor *Lang*, which shows «Christ before Pilate» on the garden-side, and is probably unequalled in the boldness of its architecture and perspective.

Tastefully restored is also the house of the bookseller Guido Lang, who in order to accomodate the increasing throng of visitors, had a complete storey built on to his house.

With that fine sense of style which characterises the Ammergau, he has understood how to bring the new part into harmony with the old, so that the venerable publishing house has no need to be ashamed of its new vesture. Interesting too in the Oberdorf is the old original house of the firm *Georg Lang sel. Erben*, the Klepperhaus termed so from the machine which was used for making the grained frames which were made there in the Rococo period. The noise which this machine made in working,



Garden-side of the Mayor's house.

the village people called Kleppern» (clattering) and for that reason the house was named Klepperhaus. It is one of the most interesting of the old Ammergau houses and with it grew the prosperity of the family Lang. Of the more modern houses those of Zwinck Bros. and Schilcher are amongst the prettiest, and of late years many such have sprung up. We must give the Ammer-



The House of Georg Lang sel. Erben (Guido Lang, with Post-office).

gauers credit for having done their best to try to retain in their new buildings the style and character of the houses of the place, thus preserving the uniformity of the general effect; although unfortunately here and there deviations in the wrong direction have been made, *e.g.* on the front of the inn «zur alten Post»,

a very old building which at one time used to be the post-office. Here the landlord has put up a trophy, decorated with flags, with a portrait of the Post-Master General Stephan, the motive for which has been taken direct from the design on a stamp-album cover; it is as little in keeping with the old Ammergau houses as a bust of Richard Wagner would be in a church, to say



The «Klepperhaus».

nothing of the shockingly bad taste of the execution of the same. The District Council ought to have power to suppress such inartistic elements. They damage the artistic reputation of Ammergau and place it, in the eyes of superficial observers, on a level with a country village putting on town airs, whereas the pride of the Ammergauers just consists in conservatism and their artistic feeling and training of long-years' standing.

We will now, after having surveyed the village, take a view of the surrounding country. The situation of Ammergau is, we would say pleasing rather

than impressive; we do not find ourselves yet among really high mountains, but only between the spurs of the Ammer range. The most interesting part of this delightful group presents itself to view in the upper Graswang valley near the castle of Linderhof. Between two enormous mountain ridges running west to east the rocky giants of the Ammer range rise. Whilst the southern chain is divided into three separate groups, the northern range

runs, like a blank wall, beginning at the Kofel, right along up to the Tegelberg near Hohenschwangau. Down below between these two crests, the snow-white Gries — the dry bed of the upper Ammer stream — winds its way through dark

woods and green meads; and, whilst in times gone by, the young Ammer, passing through the Ettal of to-day, emptied itself over the Kienberg down into the Loisach, it has in later centuries broken through the stony ridge of its native mountains and cleared a way for itself to the north. Just in this gap which divides the Laber from the ridge of the Sonnenberg lies Am-

mergau. The cone of the Kofel, rising 500 m. out of the valley with its steep and dangerous looking slopes, strikes us as being the most remarkable. This Kofel was already known to the Romans. They named the settlement in Ammergau «*ad Cofeliacas*» after it. In the middle-ages on May 1st, the betrothals of bridal couples were celebrated on its summit with dance and music. On May 30th 1580 a colossal wooden figure of a knight was set up which the merchant Pabst of Nürnberg had made. Later it was replaced by a large wooden cross which generally has to be renewed every 10—16 years, unless it has already been destroyed by lightning and storm. The Kofel must have presented a most glorious spectacle, when in 1807 it stood enveloped in flames. The conflagration lasted ten days and the enormous red-hot trunks of the trees slid down into the valley like rods of fire. The cruel walls moreover exact continual loss of life. Although a good path



Peasant house in Oberammergau.



The Kofel in winter, covered with ice and snow.

now leads up to the top, I would not advise inexperienced climbers to make the ascent of the Kofel without a guide. The view from the top, which latter can easily be reached in 1½ hrs. from the village, is extremely fine, especially that of Oberammergau of which we get a capital birds-eye view. On the «*Kofelachsel*» there is a cave the so-called «*Kofelküche*». Here the mysterious «*Kofelweibchen*» resides, who for ages past supplies Ammergau with children, and if they are found on the road after vespers she comes and carries them off again.

The Kofel is the eastern corner-pillar of the «*Sonnenberg*» ridge, of which the «*Zahn*»

and the
«*Püschling-
spitz*» peep
over into Am-

mergau,
whilst the
highest point
of the moun-
tain range
(Klamspitze
1934 m.) is
hidden by the
mountains in
front. Along
the foot of
the Kofel, de-
lightful walks
through
shady woods
lead right
across the
valley to the
«*Bärenloch*»
at the foot
of the Laber.
This grand
mountain



View of Oberammergau from the summit of the Kofel.

encloses Ammergau to the south-east, rising to a height of 1680 m. and is noteworthy for its glorious view into the plain *Graswang*, *Loisachthal* and the mighty *Wettersteingebirge*. A neighbouring peak of the Laber is the *Ettaler Mandl* (not visible from Ammergau). To the left of the Laber the «*Aufacker*» and «*4 Hörule*» join on to the circle of mountains surrounding Ammergau. Whilst on the one hand the entire Laber consists of solid marble, a peculiar yellow sandstone appears in the last-mentioned mountains. Farther to the left, in the north, the Ammer enters flat country, and there appears the thickly-wooded «*Schergenberg*» belonging to the group of the Trough mountains. Seen from here it forms the background to the pretty, peaceful village of Unterammergau, high up to the left of which glistens the Unterammergauer «*Wetzsteinbruch*» (stone quarry), like a gaping wound in the dark forest. Still more to the left is the *Steckenberg* and in front of it the

far reaching group of the « *Osterbichl* » hills, upon the highest point of which a stone Crucifixion Group stands. Towards it we will now turn our steps.

We pass the villas formerly belonging to Diemer, which lie there in their new ugly coats of whitewash like soulless bodies from which life departed when their late master, the former Cho-

ragus Johannes Diemer was called to join the heavenly Choir. The houses, — which have belonged to one of the truest Ammergauers, one of the most zealous workers in the Passion Play, one of the bravest hearts for the well-being of his home — are now the property of strangers. They only awaken sad recollections among the Ammergauers. The Marocco House too, which the deceased had bought from the private property left by King Ludwig II and had re-erected on this plot of ground, looks down so sadly from among the green larches. It lacks the care and attention of its former owner, who bought it out of love and devotion for his royal master and tended it with loving hand. Where formerly the old Ammergauer spirit reigned, hard-hearted speculation is now dominant, and sad memories of the past hover round old Osterbichl with its forlorn houses.

Mounting the steep ascent over the Osterbichl, we finally reach the Crucifixion group, a gift of King Ludwig II.

A large open space in front of the monument is covered with prayer-benches, and on particularly festive occasions, such as for instance St Ludwig's Day and the anniversary of the King's death, a mass is read here.

The view we get here over the village, the surrounding mountains, and the green fields and the hills, is wonderfully fine.



Royal hunting-lodge Pirschling.



Hotel and Pension Osterbichl.

For my part, what attracts me always more than the monument, is the place on which it stands, which unites in itself the peace, and at the same time, the deep melancholy of mountain scenery. Let us imagine we see the royal donor, as on peaceful moonlight nights he drives through the quiet village, past the houses of his sleeping subjects, and up to the Crucifixion group, here to pour out his heart

before the
Lord, lonelier
and poorer
than the poorest of his people. Let us imagine him, as the mountain-breeze plays with his dark locks, whilst he kneels at the feet of the Crucified One; as his dark, dreamy eyes greedily drink in the beauty of the surroundings. And if we picture to ourselves this scene before the «Crucifixion» in its stony calm,
— «dann fasst

disguise the fact that, on me personally, it has as a whole never made such a great impression as I have wished and hoped for. Whether it be the more than life-size proportions of the figures, or the relatively low Cross, or the almost too plentiful drapery on the figures of St John and Mary, or the style of the whole altogether, I have never been able to find in it the fascination which I should so like to.

I do not wish however to influence the unprejudiced on-looker with my views; the monument is certainly imposing, and the blending in one of the Virgin Mary with the Niobe of the Antique may appear to many highly original. The inscriptions chosen by the King himself are very beautiful: «From King Ludwig II,



Crucifixion Group.

uns der
Menschheit
ganzer Jam-
mer an» —
then the
whole misery
of mankind
stands out
before us, —
and it is as
if we saw
Fate stalk
with gigantic
strides over
the destinies
of men and
nations, and
halt before
the «Ecce
homo on
Golgotha.

The mon-
ument itself
is of Kel-
heim marble,
and possesses
great beau-
ties, though

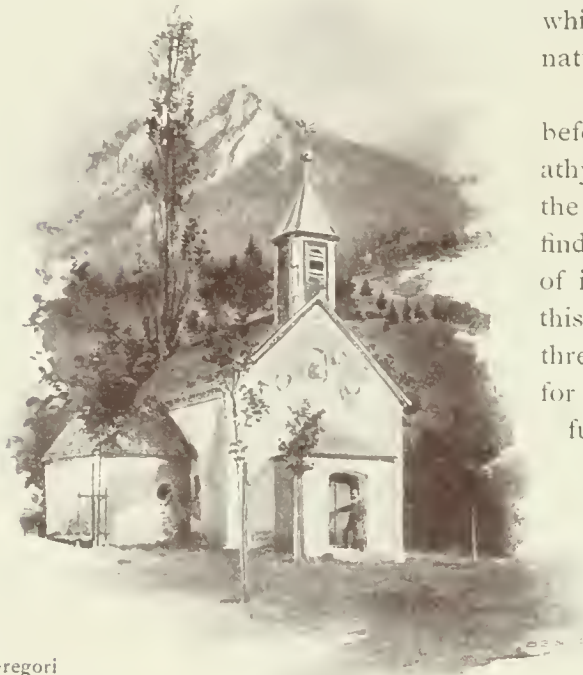
I cannot

in memory of the Passion Play, to the art-loving Oberammergauers, true to the customs of their fore-fathers.» In the middle of the base stand the words of the Gospel: «Woman, behold thy son!» and «Son, behold thy mother!» The sculptor has successfully embodied this, I might say, the most *human* moment in the death of Christ. We see the mouth of the Saviour still opened in uttering these words. St John, weeping, lifts up his clasped hands, whilst the «Mater dolorosa» covers her face with her garment.

The monument in its entirety is 40 ft. high; the Crucifix is 19 ft., and the other two figures each 14 ft. high. In the relatively slight difference between the size of the Crucifix, and that of the two figures beneath, lies perhaps that, which makes the whole appear so unnatural to us.

We will offer up a short prayer before the monument, which royal sympathy bestowed on faithful subjects. Happy the people, that, like the Ammergauers, finds so much recognition in the heart of its King. The wonderful relation to this strange Prince runs like a bright thread through the history of Ammergau for the last thirty years, and the faithful hearts of the people should not be blamed for not being able for long years to forget nor eradicate the sorrow of his death.

We cast a last glance over the glorious view, and then we go on our way, with sad memories clinging to us. Along the foot of the Kofel a picturesque walk



Gregori
Chapel.

through the woods leads us over the «Dettenbühl» to the «Bärenloch»; then we turn in the direction of the village. Past the pretty houses of Zwinck's, and the newly-built hospital, we go up to the swimming-bath, and St Gregor, the property of the Lang family, following always the Laine, a cool, clear mountain stream. Here the little Gregori Chapel still stands, up to which the supplicatory processions against devastation by rain come. It contains an interesting picture of the Passion Play of 1860, by the Tyrolese painter Pögl. (The Key must be brought from Ammergau.) We see here from the extensive shingle, to what a size the tiny mountain stream has already swollen.

A delightful «hermitage», built of logs and bark, which the community has dedicated to its faithful friend and spiritual adviser Daisenberger, calls to mind the kindly figure of this great, noble, and true priest, who so loved to walk out to this place, and spend hours there in silent devotion. Here he reviewed the past

eighty years of his life, and perhaps called to mind the words of the Psalmist: «And if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow.» But his influence meant blessings upon generations to come, and



St. Grégor.

his work has sown the seed of everlasting harvests. Deeply moved, we leave this peaceful spot, and after having looked at the gardens of Lang's house, we return along the pretty path. There are many other nice excursions to be made from Oberammergau; you will however do well in such outings to take a native of the place along with you. In mountain trips the

numerous royal hunting-paths prove very convenient. Especially within the last ten years, since the Prince Regent Luitpold holds his extensive chamois-hunting parties in Ammergau, many new paths have been made, and old ones repaired; still, in spite of this, there is a large field open to the lover of rock-climbing. You have only to try the pinnacles of the Geierköpfe, the crumbling rocky walls of the Kreuzspitze (2185 m.), or the sharp ridges of the stony fields of the Hochplatt.

The excursion most worth making, for non-climbers, is of course a drive into the Graswang valley, to the royal castle of Linderhof, and the «Hundingshütte», situated in a lonely wilderness on the road to the Plansee. Highly interesting too is a visit to the mills and quarries of Unterammergau.

I have now, to the best of my abilities, described Ammergau and its surroundings to the reader. A description of the theatre I will reserve till later, as a lengthy chapter is to be devoted to the Passion Play.



«Hermitage» dedicated to geistl. Rath Daisenberger.



Ammergau. Scene on the Ammer.



Oberammergau. Drawn in 1820 by Jos. Ant. Lang, altar-painter, Oberammergau.

History of the Village of Oberammergau.

Anyone, not well informed in the matter, who comes to Ammergau expecting to find there a country village like any other, with country customs and country people, will be greatly astonished not to meet with anything of the kind. If he is acquainted with Bavarian peasant-life, he will at once notice the difference between the inhabitants of Ammergau and those of the other Bavarian mountain villages. If he comes to the Passion Village, with the naiveté and complete ignorance of existing conditions, which many of the visitors possess, he will look on the Ammergauers as being typical of Bavarian country-folk, will to his great disappointment have to forego the «Schuhplattlertanz», and on arriving home again will rave about the Passion Play, and «Bavarian peasant-life». But even better informed people, such as for instance W. Wyl, commit the error of

regarding the Ammergauers as primitive rustics, and ascribe the amount of culture, which they discover in them, to external influences. They are just simple, homely peasants, to whom the 19th century, with its improved travelling facilities, has brought a large number of visitors, and through them wealth and prosperity, and a certain amount of culture. And every stranger, who has seen the play, and spent a few marks in the quiet village, has the agreeable feeling of having been a «bearer of culture» to the village inhabitants.

And now, with the aid of history, I beg to oppose these views. In my eyes the 19th century has given the Oberammergauers nothing that they did not already possess, nay, on the contrary, in the first half it has *taken* rather than given. The intercourse with strangers has certainly done good by raising the general welfare, but *mentally* and *spiritually* it has harmed more than benefited them, or, at the best, has passed over them leaving no traces. Anyhow it has never had that influence on them, which the stranger would so like to credit to himself.

You ask, dear Reader, why? I however ask you: «Can you tell by looking at the alabaster image of Ettal, that since 600 years millions of people have knelt before it, or can you tell from the thousand-year-old gothic cathedral, that in the course of centuries throngs of devotionists have visited it?» Just as little can you perceive in a people, which looks back upon a thousand-year-old culture among its mountains, whether a few hundred strangers more or less have come into contact with it. The Ammergauer, seen in his best light, is the result of centuries. As the marble in the Ammergau mountain slowly and gradually, by a process extending through aeons of time, develops into the noble substance from which works of art are created, so has a relatively long process formed the character of the Ammergau people out of the finest and noblest «mind-atoms»; and even the frivolity of the 19th century has not been able to destroy them. When we review the principal features of this gradual development, we come first upon the herculean form of the Guelf Ethiko, who in 900 took up his abode in Ammergau. Think how the romantic appearance of the war-like and luxurious Guelf must have stamped itself on the memories of those ancient serfs of Ammergau, and how through the same a sense for display and colour, and for chivalrous romance must have been awakened in the simple peasant-youth, which has transmitted itself to the succeeding generations.

Then centuries pass; the road along which the Guelf once entered into the «Ead Thal» (dreary valley) is overgrown again. Like the bramble-hedge in the fairy-tale, the virgin forest closes again over the first steps of civilization. But the Prince comes, who clears a way through the forest, so that the life once kindled might not expire again in blank oblivion. Up over the Kienberg rides the valiant emperor; he carries the holy image, and sets it up in the «Ead Thal»; he founds a community, in which the echoes of the poesy of Wolfram v. Eschenbach still vibrate; he builds a minster, a stronghold of faith; and behold, religion and art join hands with romance. The teaching of deep-thinking and artistically-minded monastics adds atom on atom to the already existing material in the minds of the people. What mountain scenery with its terrors and beauty has already begun, what the sound mind of a capable folk already possessed in steadfastness and ability, is now brought to a ripe development through ingrafted artistic schooling

and deep religious teaching. When at the end of the last century the old Benedictine Abbey of Ettal, the foster-mother of Ammergau, was then abolished, it left to its child a spiritual inheritance such as a mother rarely leaves its child, an inheritance of a religious and artistic talent, but also of a culture and enlightenment, of a firm and independent character such as is seldom met with. To actualize this inheritance at all times with manly courage and deep feeling, is the bequest of the late generation to the present one, and I would only express the wish that the Ammergauers may always be mindful of their past history. However much modern times and new ideas may influence them, nothing better can be given to them, nor can they attain to anything better, than that, which past centuries have already given them.

I am guilty of no fault then, when I say that the Ammergauers (inclusive of Ettal) are an ancient, civilized, and cultured people. That is the «good old monastic discipline», as Scheffel once said of them.

Whoever views the Ammergauers from this standpoint will regard them with the respect which is due to the descendants of ancient families, and will confound them just as little with the «Schuhplattling» peasantry, which is the pride of Schliersee and neighbouring places, as with the superficial culture, the unfortunate result of speculation, of the big cities.

He will always look for the noble and conservative spirit of their ancestors in them, and he will certainly find it, if he sets about it in the right manner.

And now let us go back to the very commencement of their history. We know that Ammergau was known to the Romans, for in all probability the great military road from Verona to Augsburg led between the settlements of Parthanium and Abudiacum (Partenkirchen and Epfach), and through that of «ad Cofeliacas». That this latter was Ammergau, is confirmed by the appended *Fl. ambrum*, which decidedly denotes the Ammer. The dark type of the Ammergauer may well be traced back to this mixing with Roman blood, and who knows how many of the peculiarities of the world-conquerors, of their mental training, of their culture, and also of their character, have not entered into the soul of the Bajuvarian race, and remained, in the loneliness of the mountains, more uncontaminated than elsewhere. So much in the passionate and easily-moved Ammergau race can be retraced to Roman descent.

Then for a long time we hear nothing more of Ammergau. We learn that Christianity was brought over from the Lech into the Ammer valley; in 746 the priest Thosso, afterwards Bishop of Augsburg, had built a church there, at Waltenhofen, to which he was appointed by Bishop Wikterp, and with other priests conducted the spiritual welfare of the surrounding districts. We also know from old traditions, that all the country between Ammergau and Waltenhofen belonged to one parish.

At the end of the 9th century, the old Guelf, Ethiko, sad at heart, and at variance with the world, appeared in Ammergau. With twelve of his followers he withdrew to his villa, Ambrigo, where he spent the rest of his life in peaceful solitude. Where this settlement of the surly Guelf and his companions stood, or where their burial-places are, no one knows now, nor, in spite of all efforts, have any clues been found. Those who derive the name Ettal from Ethiko-Thal (Ethiko

valley) believe that the seat of the world-weary Guelf was in Ettal, as well as the monastery which he founded, and that the Emperor Ludwig, whose grandmother was descended from the Ethiko branch, was induced by the memory of his ancestors to build his monastery on the site of the old one of Ethiko. For the rest, the convent of Ammergau founded by Ethiko was removed by his son to Altomünster and later to Altdorf in Swabia.



Glass-painting. Emperor «Ludwig the Bavarian» in the Rathaus of Oberammergau.
Gift of King Ludwig II, in memory of the Passion Play of 1880.

For two hundred years Ammergau remained in the hands of the Guelfs, until the last direct descendant of Ethiko, Welf VII, in order to meet the demands of his extravagance, sold his German family-estates, his possessions, about 60 farms in Ammergau included, to the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. Thus Ammergau passed to the Hohenstaufens, but later, after the feud with Henry the Lion, it was conferred, together with the former property of the Guelfs, the Duchy of Bavaria, upon Otto of Wittelsbach by the Emperor. Bavaria with Ammergau became the property of the Wittelsbachers, with whom it remained.

When on the 23rd of October 1314 the Bavarian Prince, Ludwig, then thirty-two years old, was elected German King, a time of glorious struggles began for Bavaria, but over Ammergau a star had ascended, whose rays were to pierce the gloom of the primeval forest which had grown thick again over Ethiko's grave.

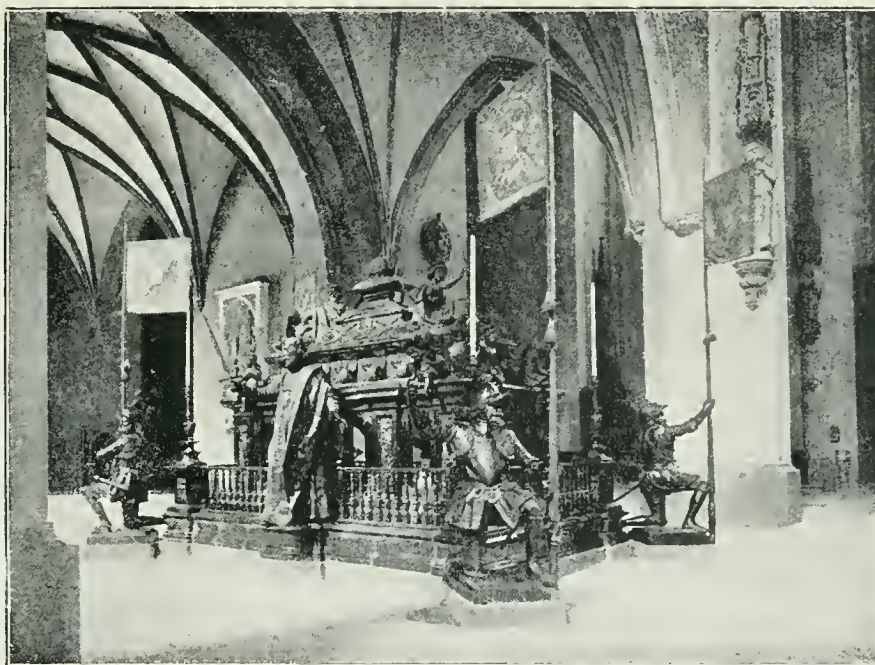
What prompted the Emperor in the midst of the distractions and disappointments of his journey to Rome to think of his native mountain-forests, is, according to Trautmann, well told in an old chronicle, from which I take the following passages.*) — «It brings us to Italy, where the Emperor on his pilgrimage to Rome was one day kneeling in his cell in earnest prayer, pleading to the Mother of God for a turn in his adverse fate. There appeared

to him, to quote an old «incunabulum» in the convent of Wessobrun,**) «through the bolted door, an old white-haired monk in black robes, and comforts the Emperor in his sorrow». Everything would take a favourable turn, if, to please «his dearest Mother Mary», he would build a convent in a place in Bavaria, called Ampfrang,

*) C. Trautmann: Oberammergau und sein Passionsspiel, Buchner'scher Verlag Bamberg 1890.

**) Sentences in double commas are old German in original text.

for the disciples of St Benedict. As a pledge the old man drew from his cowl «a white figure of Mary, and gave it to the Emperor as a gift from God». As the monk had said, so things came to pass, and when Ludwig returned to German soil he asked Heinrich Vendt, an Ammergau hunter, at Partenkirchen, after the place where he was to fulfil his vow. And they showed him the path, «and so the Emperor came to the Ampffrang, there he saw nothing but a great wilderness and a very dense forest, into which the hunter led him; and he came to a great fir-tree, before which the Emperor's horse fell down thrice on his knees. And would not go any farther. That was a significant sign that the cloister was to be



Monument to the Emperor Ludwig the Bavarian,
from the great Elector Maximilian, designed by Peter Candid, with bronze figures by the brass-founder
Dionysius Frey of Kempten. Inside is the stone slab by Hanns der Steinmeissel.

built there». And the Emperor had the whole wood cut down, and the convent and the church built, and richly endowed the monastery with lands and guilds. And on the high-altar he placed the figure of the Virgin, which he had brought with him from Italy, and he commanded that, when he died, they should lay his body in the Choir of the Minster». So far Karl Trautmann. The wish of the great Emperor was not carried out. Nobody knows where the body of him who died in exile rests. In 1438, his successor, Duke Albrecht the Third, erected to him, in the cathedral of Our Lady, a tombstone by the skilful hand of Hanns der Steinmeissel, which was later on covered with a magnificent bronze monument. The figure of the Mother of God was however to bear the name of «foundress of the Convent», as the monk had directed.

On the 28th of April 1330, the Emperor came from Munich to lay the foundation-stone of the building in person. In two years the buildings were habitable, and thirteen knights, and twenty-two Benedictine monks, fourteen of whom were priests, moved into peaceful Ettal.

The Emperor, wishing to push on the work as much as possible, called upon the inhabitants of the neighbourhood to lend a helping hand with the building of the convent and the cultivation of the whole country around. To which end he took them under his special care, ratified their old rights and conferred new ones on them.

In particular, the peasantry of Oberammergau were presented, on the occasion of the laying of the foundation-stone, with the following document, drawn up on St George's Day in 1330 at Munich, which runs thus in the original:

Wir, Ludwig von Gottes Genaden römischer Kayser, zu allen Zeiten Mehrer des Reichs, thun kundt allen den, die disen Brieff ansehen oder hören lesen, dass wir von besonder Genaden der Paurtschaft gemeinlich zu Oberamergau, die Guadt gethan haben und thun, dass wir wollen, dass sye Erbrecht und Paurecht haben, auf den Guettern es seinen Hof oder Huch, die gelegen seindt in dem Amergau, die wir mit Aygenschaft der Vogtey zu unsern neuen Closter Ettal unsrer lieben Frauen göben und geordnet haben, was die sindt geistlicher, weltlicher hinfüran die Gepaurschafft bey den unsern Genaden beileiben lassen in aller Weis, und Gewohnheit, als sie dan die Guet vorher genossen haben und ingehabt, doch dass sie die Gueth, Hof oder Hüb jährlich verzuasen sollen zu unsern neuen Kloster Ettal und andern, den die Gueth mit Aigenschaft zugehören. Davon wollen wir, und gebietten allen unsern Vizthumben, Ambtleuten, Pflegern, Richtern, wie die genant sind die izeo sind und fürbaz werden, dass sye die vorgeannte Paurschafft, auf diese vorbeschribene unsere Genad schirmen und fitern, und nicht gestatten, dass Ihm die Niemandt überfache in kein Weis bei unser Hulde. Und darüber zu Urkundt und Sicherheit geben wir In disen Brief mit unsern Insigt versigelt, der geben ist zu München, da man zählt von Christi Geburth 1330 Jahr an Sant Geörgen Tag in dem 16. Jahr unsres Reichs, in dem dritten Jahr des Kaiserthumbs.

Thus it was that light broke through the levelled forest, the dawn of an era, which conferred upon the individual the right of free development. In all parts the peasantry were at that time sunken in degradation, in serfdom bordering on slavery; the Ammergauers stood free in their own rights, they were protected from all monastic oppression, and although they were under



Ettal, 1340—1744 (before the re-building).

certain obligations, yet they had also rights, which they knew how to uphold on all occasions. And here again we find that element, which even now characterizes the Ammergauers, the strong sense of independence which the Ammergauer even to-day shows against all encroachments upon his rights. Secure from the oppression of serfdom and bondage, they were free to select as they thought proper the most congenial of the factors which affected them, and the shrewd Benedictines knew how to handle them accordingly.

The organisation of the new institution was highly remarkable; for as Karl Trautmann relates in his excellent book: «not only should a convent be built here, but also a home for men of knightly birth, who had rendered good services to the Emperor in his wars. Thirteen knights with their ladies were added to the twenty monks under the rules of St Benedict, and to quote the cordially-worded charter of foundation, «the monks were to hold steadfast to their Order, and the knights and ladies to their marriage-vows». One of the knights presided over the community as Master, and had the entire supervision of the convent with all its belongings, the clergy and the laity on the other hand were united in the common bond of holy worship, and although the knights were allowed, with the Masters permission, to pursue pastimes conformable to their rank, such as archery, deer-stalking, falconry, and hunting, yet they were nevertheless subject to religious discipline, and had to appear at holy mass, at all choral services in the church, and five times in the year to receive the «Body of our Lord». No game of hazard was allowed, nor draughts, nor any game for money. Heavy drinking and dissolute living were strictly tabooed, at table a solemn silence prevailed, interrupted only by the voice of the reader, who had to read in German something «that was divine». The children born in the establishment were only allowed to remain three years with their parents, — no longer, — then they had to be cared for elsewhere. The knights were bound to wear in their dress no other colours but blue and grey, the ladies blue. Thus life at the convent was regulated down to the smallest detail».

Strange too was the shape of the cathedral. The walls rise on a twelve-sided base, and are supported by triple columns. Round the centre was built a vaulted circuit of twelve chapels, above it, in the same proportion, a loft or gallery opening towards the interior in a segmental arch. The church had its prototype in the romanesque Basilica of the knights of St Peter at Wimpfen on the Neckar, of which the outside walls were likewise dodecagonal. Above the gallery rose the broad windows with rich tracery, and to the east the choir was built, which was to contain the tomb of the founder. The interior seems in the beginning to have had a flat ceiling, and, according to Trautmann, to have received its structural development later on, whether according to the original plan, the writer is not able to say, but he quotes the description of Father Ludwig Babenstuber: «That abbot *Stephan Brecht* (1476—1492), besides other laudable functions, has also built the high vaulted roof, and has artistically converged the same, so that the entire weight falls on a single pillar, at the same time resting on its centre. Here a clear central space of 25 metres in diameter, with fire-proof stone vaulting had been raised up on a single, isolated central column, a style of building which was afterwards copied by *Charles IV* in the Augustine Prebendary-Church of the Ascension of the Virgin Mary at Prague. Trautmann refutes the opinion of various historical writers, that

the Emperor Ludwig wished, in his convent, a kind of imitation of the Holy Grail. He in particular bases his opinion upon the fact that the knights were allowed to marry, which is not in accordance with the ideal of unmarried life in the service of the Grail.

I cannot share this opinion of Trautmann. I certainly believe too, that such a concrete, and in all religious enthusiasm, positive nature as the Emperor Ludwig's, would never have carried into actual life an ideal, which really only belonged to the fantastic world of poetry, and an ideal only conceivable in the

same, the more so as the *fictitious* Grail infatuation would have been averse to his *real* devout worship of God. That on the other hand the glorious work of Wolfram von Eschenbach did not influence his creation in its outer form, I do not consider unlikely. That the intellectual [and imaginative] Wittelsbacher knew the work of the Bavarian poet is certain, and that such an important work must doubly captivate the mind, at a time when there was little to read and little to think about; when noteworthy events were few and far between, is equally certain. Why should not the chivalrous King, when he founded the church, have been involuntarily influenced by the potent works of Wolfram in the choice of twelve knights and in the statutes for the same, resembling in several points the rules of the knight-templars, just as 500 years later his descendant Ludwig II was so completely influenced by the magic spell



Ettal, from an engraving of Merian 1654.

of the Grail and old folk-lore, through the medium of Richard Wagner.

From this time on began a happy time in old Ammergau. The newly-erected convent flourished, and the royal donor often came to visit his work. As late as the month of April in the year of his death, 1347, he had come to his beloved Ettal, and perhaps the gracious figure of the «foundress» floated before him, when, out hunting, he breathed his last, exclaiming: «Maria, süsse Fraue bis by meiner Schidung» (Mary, dear Lady, be with me in the hour of death).

I may perhaps be allowed on this occasion to mention a work which treats of the various epochs of the history of Ettal, namely the epic poem «Eines Kaisers

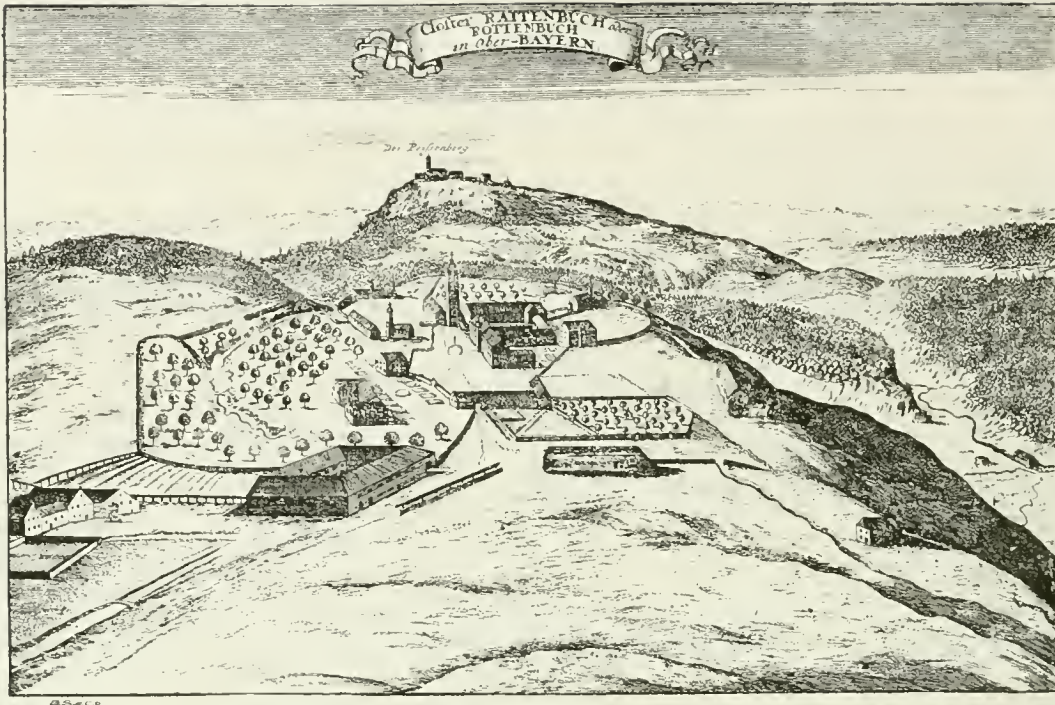
Traum» by Kathinka Countess of Haugwitz, née Countess of Pappenheim, which in fine vigorous verse immortalises her native Ettal. The work appeared in 1891, published by Grote of Berlin.

In studying the history of Oberammergau, a remarkable thing strikes us: we see an artistic, highly talented, shrewd, enlightened folk, German to the backbone, a folk which combines deep religious sentiments with the most perfect tolerance, open to receive all new intellectual ideas and yet retaining all their native customs and old traditions; and this people for the last 600 years have been reared in the Catholic Faith, the Archfiend of culture, tolerance, enlightenment, and German nationality. Now quite recently the Catholic spirit has been declared in certain quarters to be irreconcilable with the German spirit, and they make Catholicism answerable for various incidents brought about by political events.

Have these people completely forgotten, that it was the missionaries from Rome, who guided the first steps of these barbaric children to civilization, who brought them up to become an able and vigorous people? In the convents, those forcing houses of the mind, as they are so frequently termed, art and culture-flourished, science flourished; now it was just in the convents that sincere veneration preserved the remains of old Germanic customs. The old heroic lays and legends, to whom do we otherwise owe them but to the Catholic Church?

When speaking of the spirit of Catholicism, I do not mean of course that warlike spirit, which, so incomprehensible to people of other creeds, has forfeited so much of its splendour in political disputes and party-struggles — I mean that illuminating spirit which for nineteen centuries past has matured from the warmth of implicit faith the finest fruits in art and poetry. The spirit, which had given birth to a Thomas à Kempis, a Michael Angelo, a Dante, and produced our wonderful gothic cathedral — the spirit which transforms the glow of faith into the power of consummation, according to the well-known physical law, has brought forth the «Tree of the Cross» of the Passion Play, from whose branches, reaching far over the limits of confessional narrowness, the «spring-breezes» of life-giving faith are wafted into the corrupted and blasé world. The spirit is *German* though, through and through; it has grown to an indissoluble component of the heart of the people; we can only remove it by the most destructive chemical processes, which has already so often been attempted with the caustic lie of derision, but then in this case we destroy the heart itself.

It is my belief that just in our century the German spirit is threatened by greater dangers, than by the aged teacher of mankind: the Church. We have a tendency, which, striking at the root of individuality, threatens to overstep all bounds of morality and decency, which herein sins and does not humbly exclaim: «Mea culpa», but calls out defiantly to the world, «this is my fair right — do ye likewise», which in word and deed poisons the sensitive faculties of the people with lasciviousness and cynicism in art, with scepticism and negation in intellectual circles, with pleasure-seeking and covetousness in social circles. Frivolity, shamelessness have never been *German*, the German is passionate, rough, but never designing or frivolous — scepticism and negation, that wicked derision of everything holy, have never been *German*, for the German is child-like, trusting, and reverent, — the theory of covetousness, as met with in the teachings of modern



Rottenbuch, formerly a famous canonical Augustine convent, founded by Duke Welf I of Bavaria and his spouse Judith in 1074, at the instigation of Bishop Altmanns of Passau, done away with at the secularisation. To the right of the convent church is Altomünster; to the left the former parish-church of St. Ulrich, in the background the Hohe Peissenberg, sub-parochial church of Rottenbuch.

socialism, has never been *German*, for the German is of a magnanimous, unselfish and unpretentious nature.

Our German mental life is mixed with foreign elements of all kinds — you need only look at the repertories of our theatres. In the place of Christianity we have a mixture of Pessimism and Buddhism — we have as ingredients of our art, besides the partly frivolous mythology of græco-roman antiquity, also the cynicism of the same, in connection with the physiology of a Mante-gazza — and we call all this *German*, only that which is Catholic, is *Anti-German*.

Even the most fanatical opponents of the Catholic religion would tremble if a thorough sifting were to take place



Rottenbuch.

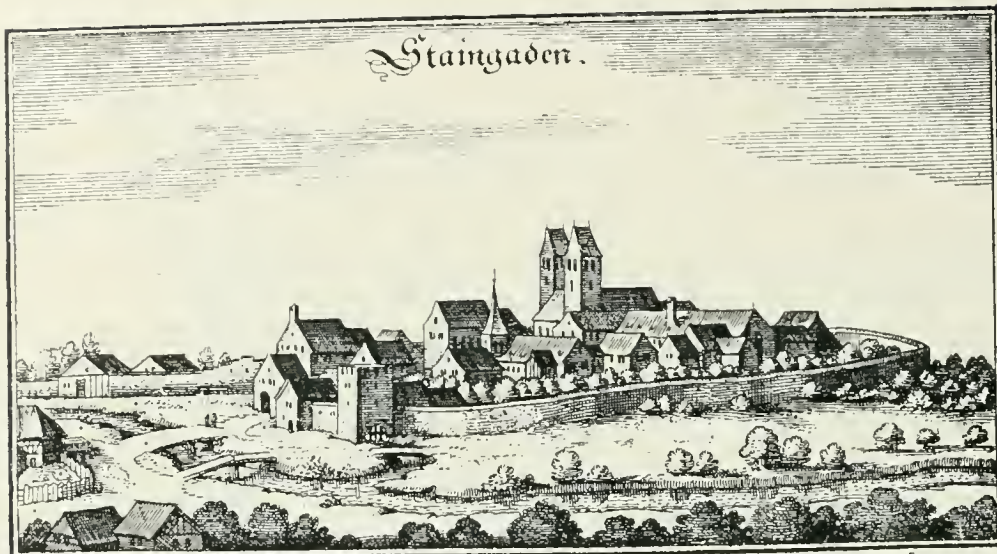
and everything disappear which the Catholic spirit has created from its beginning up to the present day; they would see the ground, upon which they had grown up, sinking under their feet, the organic connection with prior times would be



Central aisle of the present parish-church, formerly the convent-church of Rottenbuch,
(From a photograph by J. G. Gmelch, Schongau)

broken off, and the amount of life which flows from this source, enriching our people with fine spiritual characters, with poesy and art, would be exterminated, and only then when it was lacking should we sadly miss it.

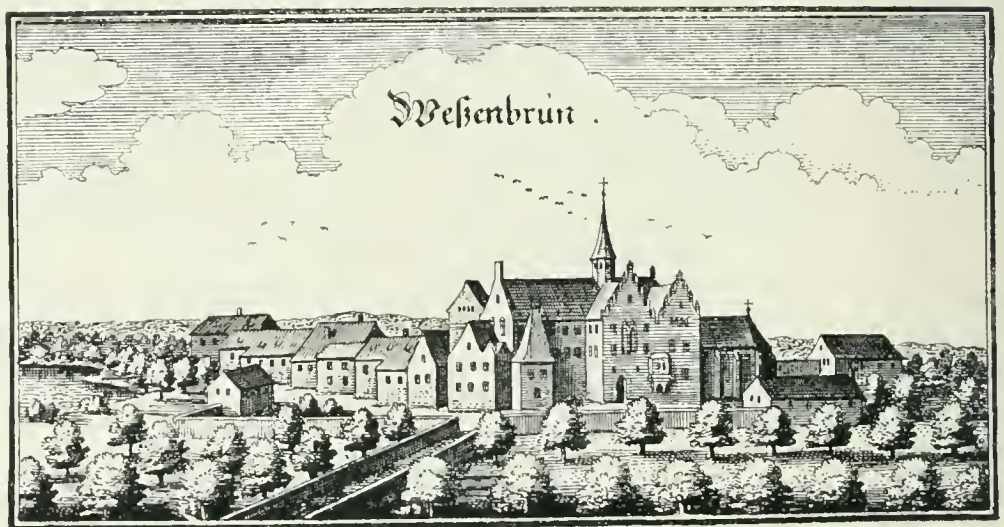
The influence of the convent in Ammergau is so well described by Trautmann in his capital book, that I cannot refrain from repeating a few passages here:



Steingaden convent, Premonstrant Abbey, founded 1147 by Duke Welf VI; burnt down in 1646 during the thirty years war, whereby its valuable library was lost.
From an engraving in Merian's «Topographia Bavariae» (Frankf. 1644).

«The district has been a clerical one since the earliest times imaginable. The long valley traversed by the green Ammer and reaching from the lonely Plansee, past Ettal, to the Passion village, once formed a part

of the *Pfaffenwinkel* (priest-pen), as the people called that far-stretching district, divided from the highlands by a firmly-united chain of stately convents, of which it was said, that you could travel about in it and eat and sleep every midday and evening at a different prelacy or abbey. From *Füssen* yonder, where the convent of *St Magnus* looks down into the foaming waves of the Lech, this chain reached in a wide curve as far as the foot of the *Benediktenwand*. There was *Steingaden*, the old Guelf foundation, and the Augustine convent of *Rottenbuch*, there were *Wessobrun* and *Polling*, *Diessen* and *Bernried*, *Schlehdorf* and *Benediktbeuren*, and as outermost watchtower on the plain, grace - spending *Andechs* — on the «holy mount» — rose over the blue waters of the *Ammersee*. Each of these names is a landmark in the as yet so little investigated old Bavarian history, for nothing was farther from the thoughts of the dwellers



Wessobrun, ancient Benedictine convent, in existence perhaps since 740, certainly since 753; 955—1065 inhabited by Augustine prebendaries, then later by Benedictines again. Famous is the «Wessobrun-prayer». — From an engraving by Merian.

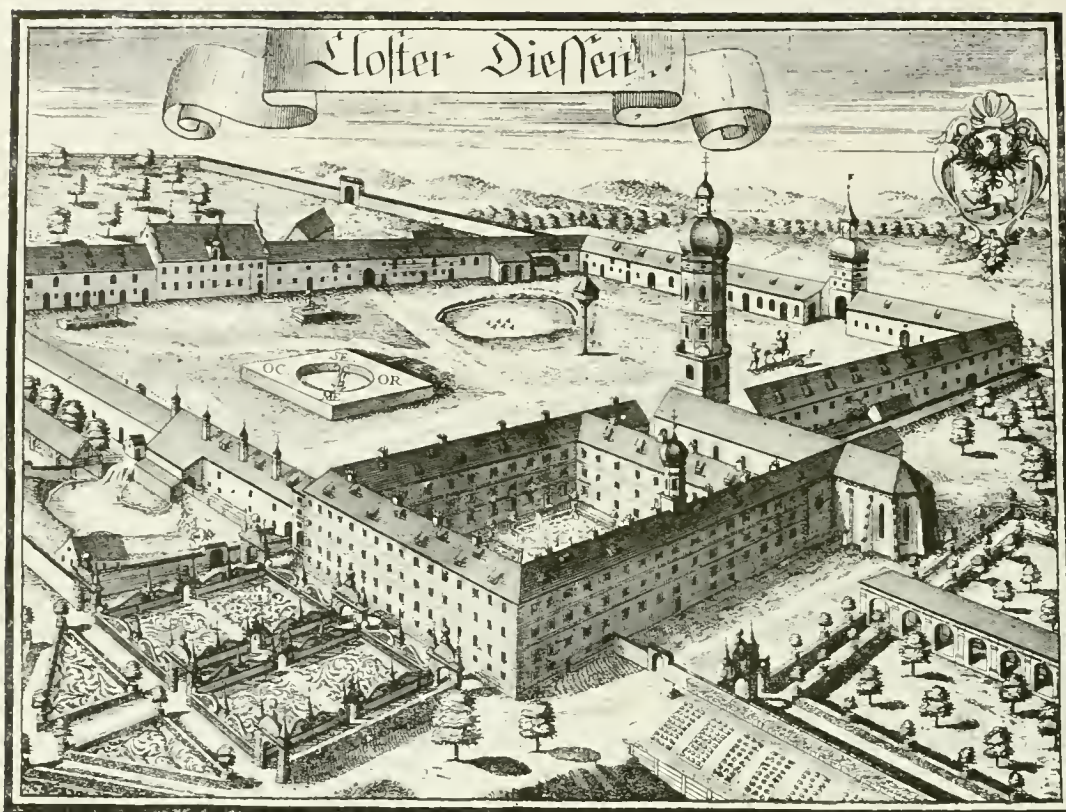
within these peaceful walls than to make their pious withdrawal from the world a barrier to culture. Since the days when the first missionaries of faith cleared the desolate wilderness with mighty blows of the axe to build their settlement, up to the dissolution of the monasteries in 1803, intellectual and artistic work has at all times found here a ready home. *At all times* we say, and not, as is usually imagined, merely during the Middle-Ages. Just at the period of the Counter-Reformation which turned the Catholic South in contradistinction to the North of Germany into such peculiar intellectual channels, crossed as they were with Roman elements, when the baroque and rococo styles had taken their chief hold in old Bavaria, these convents underwent a magnificent development. At that period appeared those glorious churches and prelaties adorned with all manner of

fascinating works of art, which up to the present day command the landscape like princely castles and which contained in their roomy, well-arranged and systematically developed libraries such a rich treasure for the learned scholars of all nations. It was not, as one usually reads, an unappreciative «*Pfaffen-armee*» (army of priests), which had nestled here and which gnawed «like rats in Noah's Ark at the works of more earnest people». You have only to turn over the leaves of old books on travel to find out what an open-handed hospitality, what a lively, refined interest there was here for all eminent works in art and science which the human mind had produced. It has certainly been a «forgotten tale» for many, that also this province has introduced to us «a picture of the dazzling beauty and the zealous creative impulse of the Catholic South German architects», which only now after a long and haughty ignoring of the facts commences to find its just recognition through the historical researches of recent days; that here, as *Westenrieder* in 1788 emphasizes, «numbers of promising young people, were adopted as children by the convents and priests, gratuitously educated, and initiated in the rudiments of the sciences». When on the 22nd of October 1758 in the old gothic house in the *Burggasse* in Munich that society of high-minded men met together, which was to found the Bavarian Academy of Science, it happened to be a child of the «*Pfaffenwinkel*» the eminent Lori, who, as he himself at all times touchingly acknowledged «had been raised and cared for by the convent of Steingaden», who in glowing terms pointed out the aims of mutual intellectual work. And these convents, above all that of Polling, have given the new Academy brave champions of enlightenment. There were,



Gothic House No. 5 in the Burg Strasse in Munich.
Here the first consultations took place preparatory to the
founding of the Academy of Science.

ing of the facts commences to find its just recognition through the historical researches of recent days; that here, as *Westenrieder* in 1788 emphasizes, «numbers of promising young people, were adopted as children by the convents and priests, gratuitously educated, and initiated in the rudiments of the sciences». When on the 22nd of October 1758 in the old gothic house in the *Burggasse* in Munich that society of high-minded men met together, which was to found the Bavarian Academy of Science, it happened to be a child of the «*Pfaffenwinkel*» the eminent Lori, who, as he himself at all times touchingly acknowledged «had been raised and cared for by the convent of Steingaden», who in glowing terms pointed out the aims of mutual intellectual work. And these convents, above all that of Polling, have given the new Academy brave champions of enlightenment. There were,

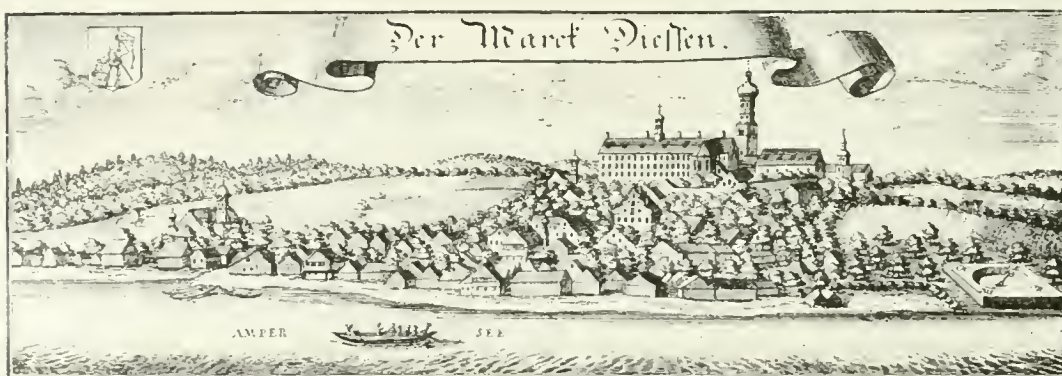


Convent of Diessen in the year 1700.

Founded in the 11th century by the Counts of Diessen, originally an Augustine monastery and nunnery, until in the 14th century, the property of the nuns came also into the hands of the monks.

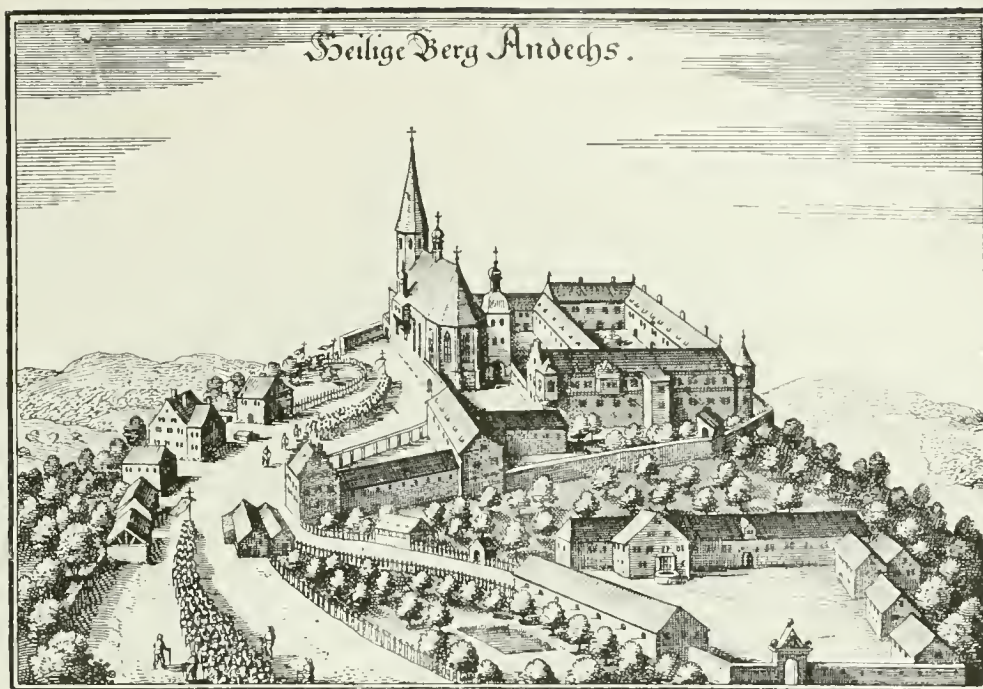
From Wening's *Beschreibung des Churfürsten- u. Hertzogthums Obern- u. Nidern-Bayrn.* Munich 1701.

only to mention two, the modest Dean *Eusebius Amort*, and the deeply learned Father *Gerhoh Steigenberger*, who rose by his own efforts to be Director of the Electoral Library in Munich, a poor cottager's son from the district of Peissenberg born of humble, but honest and pious parents, whom the convent at its own expense had trained up in Paris and Rome, to become that eminent bibliographer, whose fame still lives in the annals of the literary world. He was besides of a



Diessen on the Ammersee, in the year 1700.

cheerful, communicative and warm-hearted nature, which had nothing in common with the intolerant ignorant fanatic, whom he who comes from the North expects to find in every Catholic clergyman of our Bavarian highlands, since the superficial and odious reports by *Nicolas* and his associates.

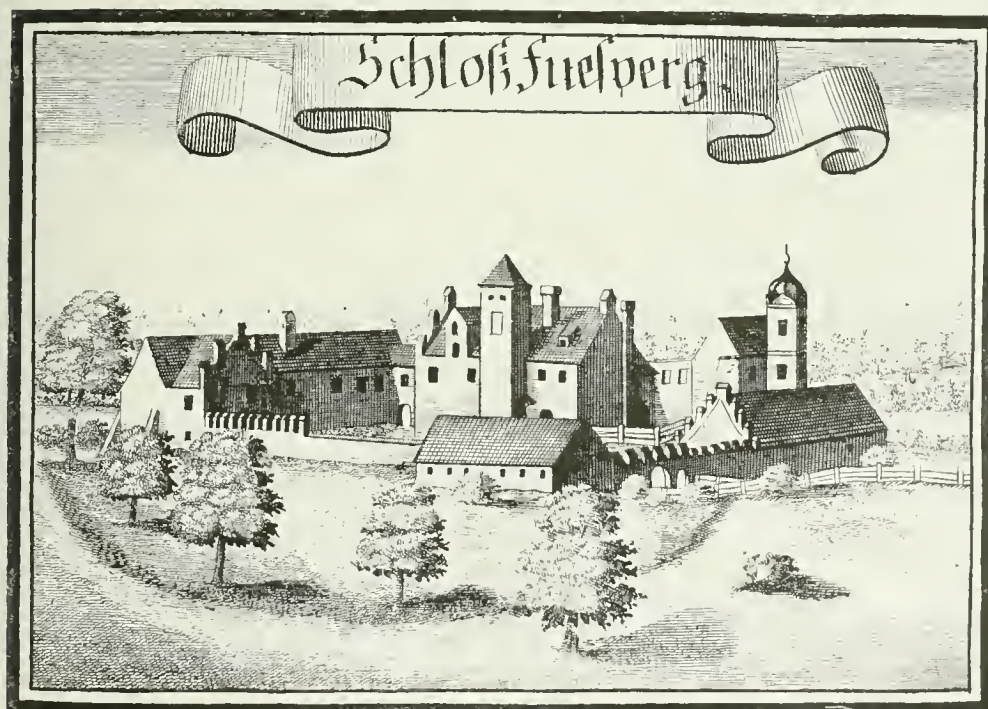


Andechs, named the «Holy Mount» on account of the exceptionally great number of holy relics which are there; belonged since past ages to the Benedictines. In 1438 it was canonical; but already in 1452—58 was fitted up as a Benedictine convent. Suppressed and sold in 1803, the convent property repeatedly changed hands, until King Ludwig I acquired it and presented it to the Benedictine community of St. Boniface in Munich. (From an engraving by Merian.)

The convents of the *Pfaffenwinkel* have through the centuries been the steadfast bearers of intellectual progress; in these times when intercourse with the outer world was difficult, their schools, seminaries, libraries and farm-steads were closely associated with the development of the district. With the *domestic* develop-

ment no less than the intellectual; and so when, in the first decades of the 16th

century the Abbot of Wessobrunn erected a printing-press for the convent, the prelates of Benediktbeuren devoted themselves with equal enthusiasm to fish-culture, and any one who has ever spent a pleasant afternoon at Andechs, or in any other cool convent



Schloss Fuesberg in Gaubing in 1500.
The Castle was from 1622 to 1802 the property of the Convent of Andechs.

brewery, has experienced for himself that the pious followers of St. Benedict have still preserved the secret of being able to brew an excellent glass of beer, remaining faithful to the rules of their Order, which not only prescribed the establishment of libraries, but also manual labour, which is such an important factor in Bavaria's domestic welfare. From the convent these accomplishments spread to the peasants' cottages, to the houses of the citizens in the market-towns, and there aroused a lively interest and vigorous trade. From the convent of Rottenbuch, where already in the year 1111 wood-carving was practised, the art has been transplanted to Oberammergau: in Wessobrunn during the 18th century a school of first-rate stucco-workers flourished, which at the time of the wars of Napoleon numbered more than a hundred heads, which sent its members out as far as France and Russia, and whose masterly productions in Ettal Church provoked unbounded admiration. One might also mention, as a small but infinitely significant proof that the quiet mental activity in the convent cell found an echo in the lower classes, the worthy figure of *Ulrich Petz*, the simple miller, who lived in *Wiedergeltingen*, a village belonging to the convent of Steingaden, about 1550. When the day's work at the mill was over, the weary man then stepped into his low parlour and took down a book from the shelf. It was no peasant's calendar, or say the «History of the Haimon's Children» with its stiff wood-cuts. But the classical works of antiquity, the languages of which he had taught himself in spare hours, until he had mastered Latin and Greek. And yet he felt no inclination to leave his native Highlands for a learned profession. He remained a simple miller and a faithful Catholic, and as such wrote on the cover of his Bible these words summing up his whole philosophy:

*Hochst gut und witz an Christum glaub,
Sonst ist als Thorheit eytel staub*

(Believe that the highest good and wisdom is in Christianity,
all else is folly, mere dust)

and added in three languages the beautiful passage «*das schwert verwundet den Leib, die red aber das gemiet*» (the sword wounds the body, but the tongue wounds the spirit).

Was not the learned natural philosopher *Schrank*, whose attention was drawn by the Prior *Michel* in Steingaden to this man's simple life, quite right when he wrote on October 18th 1785 to a friend these eloquent lines: «To me, the man, who forces his way out of the dust in which circumstances had placed him, and feels his higher calling, is too important a phenomenon for me to pass by without a vestige of enthusiasm. I pass over the unimportant showy writers whose ostentatious greatness goes no farther than the illuminated parchment, with contempt; but must express my sincere admiration for the hidden merits which the majority ignore because they dwelt under a thatched roof. I know well enough that *Petz* was no *Newton* or *Leibnitz*; but if you knew the circumstances of a village miller as I know them, you would agree with me that there is more credit in being a *Petz* than a *Newton* or a *Leibnitz*. The bibliographers may think what they like, but in my opinion the book which this man brought to my notice, was the most important discovery that I have made in the library of Steingaden».

This unique and beautiful description of the excellent historian gives us an exact idea of the intellectual and artistic development of Ammergau. Certainly

the inhabitants had in the meantime no opportunity to prove their abilities in this direction; a long time elapsed until, after the death of the Emperor Ludwig, the



«Ritter Friedrich Heinrichsreutter», Father Confessor to the Emperor Ludwig the Bavarian.
Of the Convent of Reichenbach in the Upper Palatinate, appointed in 1332 first Abbot of Ettal, died Jan. 3rd 1344
(From a very old oil-painting.)

proper relations between the young convent sovereignty and its new subjects was settled. The Ammergauers had to pay the convent moderate tithes and tribute, in return for which they enjoyed certain privileges, and were under the jurisdiction of a judge of Ettal, to whom was given power over life and death and whose court was in Oberammergau.

Already in 1356 Oberammergau was a parish of its own, which was subservient to the Convent of Rottenbuch. When the conditions of right and property



Old Ettal
Road.

between Ettal and its subjects had been arranged to the satisfaction of both parties after frequent arbitration, both sides sensibly kept to them with good-will.

The first benefit which the Ammergauers derived from the convent, was the restoration of the road through the Ammergau district over the Kienberg to Augsburg. Along this road goods were taken to Augsburg and Nuremberg from Venice, chiefly imported produce of the East-Indies, and the Ammergauers undertook the further transport of the merchandise with waggons. They carried the goods which came from Italy to Schongau, those from Augsburg to Partenkirchen, at which places they changed hands. These waggoners earned a good deal of money, formed their own guild, and were called «Rottfuhrmänner». Their earnings were still

further increased when the Emperor Ludwig in 1332 bestowed upon the modest people, the citizens and peasantry of Ammergau, the favour that all merchants who passed to and fro through there — whence they might come and whither they might go — should have a *depôt* there and store their goods there in like manner as at Murnau, under our royal will and countermand. In 1420 the Dukes Ernst, Wilhelm, and Albrecht ratified these staple-rights of the Ammergauers with the additional clause: «anywhere along the road but nowhere else, and no one shall carry merchandise except the Ammergauers with their waggons». A hill near the village still goes by the name of the *Warbichl* or *Warberg*, because the wares were stored there, and the *Esellainc* likewise, not far off, has derived its name from the beasts of burden which were watered here. The old *Rottstrasse* did not pass there where the present road to Unterammergau now is, but more to the right, at the foot of the *Kappelberg*.

This traffic brought much prosperity into the village, and this source of income was urgently necessary in a climate where field-produce and agriculture only brought in a very small profit. But it also brought Ammergau into contact with the proudly flourishing towns of Augsburg and Nuremberg. Especially the growing art of Augsburg seems to have exercised a beneficial influence upon Ammergau. Augsburg artists assisted in the decoration of the interior of the minster at Ettal, and Ammergauers were also sent to the Augsburg art-schools to learn to paint figures in colour.

This however only came about when the Ammergauers themselves began to pursue art, and the first incitement to this artistic pursuit may well have proceeded from the art of these big towns. How carving, for this was the oldest art which was practised in Ammergau, came there, cannot be definitely determined. Many are of the opinion, that they had learned it from the *Grödners*, a Tyrolese race. The probability is that this art was acquired from the neighbouring convents,

and was developed by the intercourse with the artists who worked in Ettal. It is known that in the adjacent convent of Rottenbuch, wood-carving was already practised in the year 1111, and when at the beginning of the 16th century the Swabian *Andreas Althammer*, wrote his History of Ettal, he already mentions the Ammergauers as highly noted sculptors, who could carve the whole Passion out of a nut. This skill brought the Ammergauers, even in the Middle-Ages, a great reputation, which was scarcely less than that of the present day through the 'Passion Play'. Well known are *Franz Feichtmaier*, who settled in Augsburg as an artist, and *Johann Michael* to whom the convent church of *Ottobeuren* owes most of its interior decoration. How many religious carvings in the churches of Augsburg and Nuremberg come from Ammergau, we do not know, but the fact that the merchant *Pabst* of Nuremberg set up on the Kofel the afore-mentioned figure of a knight, carved by Ammergauers, and that another Nuremberg man, *Ulrich Arzat*, founded a benefice for early Mass, indicates that a cordial relationship existed between the proud free-citizens and the village inhabitants. At any rate Ammergau is indebted to the intercourse with the great trading towns for the glorious advancement of its trade. Ammergau carvings were taken all over the world, partly by the village pedlars, partly by foreign merchants, and brought wealth into the village.

Mining was also carried on for a time. In the Middle-Ages the craze of trying to get gold and precious stones from the earth went hand in hand with alchemy.

Johannes Kufsteiner, Prelate of Ettal, 1439—1454, was seized with this passion, and through costly mining undertakings nearly brought his convent to ruin, which was only finally avoided by its dissolution. In Ammergau too, on the *Halbammer* and in the neighbourhood, ores were dug for with a certain amount of success, but the mines were all given up again and after a time heard of no more.

Thus the peaceful arts flourished in Ammergau with progressive strides, and a religious life everywhere made its appearance, the church was enriched by a benefice and a chaplainship, notable families made pious offerings and contributions, the church festivals were celebrated in a worthy manner, and good singing had certainly even then already been introduced. But we see also how strictly the Ammergauers kept to a pure and holy practice of their religion. A beneficiary was guilty of an unpriestly act, and upon the church guardians lodging a complaint against him he was suspended from office and was punished by imprisonment. He resigned on the 23rd of Nov. 1554.

From this we can see that the Ammergauers were accustomed to strict morality and were very exacting towards their clergy. Of that decay of the church, which was so readily reported in the times before the Reformation, and which may perhaps have existed in Central and Lower Germany, there seem to have been no traces in Upper Bavaria.

In 1551 King Philip II of Spain came through Ettal on his journey from Augsburg, when he with his whole court, bareheaded and with candle in hand, took part in the Corpus Christi procession.

In the following year however the Elector Moriz of Saxony, after having taken Augsburg, made an inroad into Ammergau, plundered Ettal with his hordes, and drove away and ill-treated the monks; and the damage done to the Holy Image is attributed to this rough band.

Soon after this military invasion Ammergau had again acquired its former prosperity, but at the beginning of the 17th century the population had so increased that there were scarcely enough dwellings for the number of people. Then quite unexpectedly the Very Reverend Abbot *Leonhardt Hilpolt* and the stern Warden of Murnau, *Urban Morhard*, came to Ammergau, and went with the councillors of the community, six and twelve, round the town, to see where new houses had been erected. The newly-built rooms were destroyed, the stoves broken up, and the tenants evicted. Those who would not go of their own accord, were chained to carts and carried to Austria, which at that time was very sparsely populated.

Unfortunately the Thirty Years' War followed soon after, in 1632 the Swedes invaded Germany and penetrated even as far as distant Ammergau. In Ettal the monks had fled with all valuables, only Father *Joseph Hess*, the steward of the convent, and the organist *Johannes Zieglmaier* stopped behind and were cruelly murdered. It never came to a regular pillage, for everywhere on the heights armed peasantry appeared who threatened to attack them.

The Swedes also plundered Oberammergau, for an old church account-book notes, in 1635, the expenditure of 10 *kreuzers* «for repairing the chest, which the Swedes had broken in».

Ammergau was spared for a time after this inroad. The Abbot of Ettal came to an agreement with General *Oxenstiern*, who governed Augsburg and the country round, to levy a fire-tax, and to this end received from him a written «*Salva Guardia*» document. Nevertheless however, Ammergau suffered terribly from taxation on the burdens of war; and the marching through of the Imperial troops, who made almost greater havoc than the Swedes, brought misery enough over the village. In addition every trade was at a stand-still, business and commerce were at a low ebb, and that awful scourge, the «Plague», soon afterwards broke out in the land. As early as 1631 infectious diseases spread in Bavaria and Swabia and in the year 1633 the Plague raged to such an extent in Kohlgrub and Eschenlohe that the villages became almost depopulated.

«This village» so says an old chronicle, «was through diligent watchfulness preserved from contagion until just before the «*Kirchweihfest*» (annual festival in commemoration of the consecration of the church). Then a man of the name of Schisler, who had been a day-labourer at the bailiff's in Eschenlohe all the summer, brought the plague into the village. He came in order to celebrate the festival with his family, unhindered over the hill from Eschenloh, and as his house was the first in the village, on the *Laine*, went back again without being detained. On the Monday after the festival he was a corpse. From that day to the 28th of Oct. eighty four persons died here».

Thus relates the chronicle, which is continued up to the year 1733, a hundred years after. The Geistl. Rath Daisenberger, to whose history of Ammergau we are indebted for most of the dates, is of the opinion, based on the still existing

death register, that the year '33 has been confounded with the year '32. Because from the time of *Kirchweihfest* in 1832 up to the Day of St. Simon and St. Jude as a matter of fact eighty-four persons died, whilst the death registers of the year '33 only record a few deaths, which does not preclude the possibility of the plague having already begun in '32 and lasted more than a year. On the other hand the death registers of that time are very deficient, and in the general confusion of a plague and continual change of clergy it is quite conceivable that not all deaths were entered.

In the great affliction which the horrible disease had brought upon the community, the councillors of the community, six and twelve, at last met together, and made the vow «to hold the *«Passionstragödie»* every ten years, and from this time on not a single man died, although a few still had symptoms of the plague about them».

Now this vow was nothing uncommon, it is also not to be supposed that it was the first incentive to the Ammergauers to perform the Play. Probably the Passion of our Lord had long before been represented in Ammergau, among other spiritual and temporal recreations. The general tendency inclines towards the supposition that the Ammergau Passion Play owes its origin to the convent of Ettal. I cannot share this idea, for if spiritual plays had been acted with the laity, it is most likely that Ettalers themselves would have been engaged and that traces of this would have remained in Ettal. It is altogether strange that the spiritual and artistic influence of the convents of Ettal and Rottenbuch should have spread not over the near but over the distant peasantry under their rule. The Ammergauers had priests from Rottenbuch, their jurisdiction from Ettal, and curiously enough they absorbed the best to be had in both convents, whilst the inhabitants of the villages in the immediate neighbourhood remained ordinary peasants who tilled the ground, helped to brew the beer and tended the cattle of the convents. If you take the places Ettal and Oberammergau in their relations to the Convent, you might describe the first as Martha, the latter as Mary. Perhaps the warm and intellectual Roman blood of the former settlement *ad Cofeliacas* has also had something to do with this, whilst the settlers in Ettal — which was until the foundation of the convent an *«ödes Thal»* (dreary valley), if we rightly understand the dialect of the people, who pronounce the name as *«Ead Thal»* — were rustic serfs and common labourers, who first had to turn the soil, help with the building and in all rough work, and then when invested with plots of ground were allowed to carry on their handicrafts as subjects of the convent. Also the document which the Emperor Ludwig handed to the peasantry of Ammergau, clearly shows that the population of Ammergau was already at that time a factor that had to be reckoned with. I am therefore inclined to think that the Passion Play for the most part has proceeded from the Ammergauers themselves, and principally owes its existence to the intercourse between Ammergau and the imperial towns of Augsburg and Nuremberg. It has already been pointed out how great the friendship existing between the inhabitants of these places was. When you know, how innate the dramatic vein of the Ammergauer is, how even up to the present day the love of carnival-plays and masquerading still lives in the people, you can easily imagine, that following the example of the two art-loving towns, the idea of theatrical performances arose in the imaginative brains of the Ammergauers in the long winter evenings, and since

their whole being and art was imbued with a religious spirit, what were they more likely to do than to make these plays religious and to turn them into a sort of divine service? The intelligent Benedictines took great interest in these plays, they saw in them an educational factor; for in the Catholic Church dramatic art and the fine arts had in the 10th century, since the nun Hroswitha and the Latin plays which she used to have performed in her convent, already proved of practical service in religion. *Guido Görres* even tells in his account of the Play of 1840 of a theatrical piece written before Christ, the author of which was a Jew, and which

represents the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt. A Passion Play exists however from the 4th century, «*der leidende Christus*» («The suffering Christ»), which is attributed to a patriarch *Gregory of Nazianz in Cappadocia*. If these religious plays were looked upon in the light of a kind of divine service, one can easily understand that they were so to say offered up to the Lord as votive services.



Plague Chapel on the Wackersberg near Tölz.

The period of the plague abounds in votive offerings. How many a little chapel has not arisen over the graves and been dedicated to St Sebastian and St Rochus, the patron saints of pestilence. The burghers of Weilheim had made a «*votum publicum*» or public vow, to have

a mass read every Wednesday throughout a whole year in honour of St. Anne, those of Tölz pledged themselves to hold a procession (supplicatory), the people on the Wackersberg a fast on St. Sebastian's Day and to dedicate a chapel to this saint. The performances of religious dramas were also largely promised. Thus *Guido Görres* in Waldens in Tyrol was informed of a play-book of 1722, in which stands

*die Gemein zu 7 Jahren sich verpflichtet
Zu spielen von dem jüngsten Gericht,
Wegen des Hochgewitters, das Gott verschon
Anjetzo und vor des Richters Thron,*

(«the community binds itself to perform» the Last Judgement «every seven years, in token of the severe storm, from which God protect us from this day forth and ever more») — the following paragraphs are again taken from Trautmann's book — and in 1585 a brotherhood came together in the Catholic town of *Villingen* in Swabia, which was induced

«*Vss Christlicher lieb, Inbrünstigkeit,
Zu Schuldiger Demuot und danckbarkeit
Vuserem Herrn Jesu Christ*»

(«out of Christian love and fervour, penitential humility and thankfulness to our Lord Jesus Christ») to perform at intervals of several years, at the Feast of the holy Virgin St. Catherine, the edifying «*Comedia von dem bitteren Leiden und sterben Jesu Christi*». At *Friedburg* in Hesse a society of clerical and lay members was formed in 1465 to promulgate the Passion Play on Corpus Christi Day, and also in the old Imperial-Town of *Frankfurt* many such endeavours may be referred to, the last being in 1575.

In the year 1634 the Passion of Our Lord was represented for the first time on an open-air stage by the Ammergauers in accordance with the vow which they had made, and adhered to until the year 1674. «On the 15th of May 1674 at Whitsuntide the Play was again held, and with great success too» runs a note in the oldest manuscript of the text of the Play in 1662, concluding with the words that for the «on-lookers» in the future «seats are always to be provided». The Play was again, by way of exception, presented to the people six years after this, namely in 1680, and from this date was given every ten years. Then it was performed in regular intervals up to the year 1770, which brought a serious crisis in the pious custom.

As already mentioned the sovereign interdict issued on the 31st of March 1770 put an end to passion Plays in the whole Electorate, and in consequence also affected the community of Oberammergau. All writings state that the earnest entreaties of a deputation sent to Munich were successful in obtaining an exception for the latter citizens. *But the official records of the Munich archives prove this assertion, so proudly put forward, to be incorrect*; the Ammergauers were in no respects better treated than the inhabitants of the other villages of Bavaria which held Passion Plays. But it was no such easy matter to get them to comply with this interdict.

On the 20th of April 1770 the community handed in the first petition to the ecclesiastical Court of Justice of the capital.

First of all the Ammergauers drew attention to the fact «that the local community of about a hundred and thirty years ago, namely in the year 1634, had resolved under a vow to give on an open air stage a complete representation of the Passion, because a pestilential contagion and illness had at that date visited them, and that therefore they were under the obligation to fulfil this vow made by their forefathers, the more so as it had been properly kept every ten years for such a long period.»

In the second place, the material losses were brought into the argument. «We have already» they write, «had 4000 copies (of the book of words) printed,

and spent in repairing clothes, and for felling and carrying trees necessary for building the stage, about 200 fl. also sent out many copies into various distant places; that therefore many people, — and 10 years ago over 10000 were present at the then performed Play — would travel fully two days in vain, from our being unable to give such places any certain intimation that the Play would not be given».

The petitioners mentioned furthermore and quite rightly: — «that according to the contents of the above mentioned gracious command, the Passion-Tragedy might only be held in Lent and during the Passion Week, but ours however on the 4th and 11th of June as agreed, and everything being under the direction of the local clergy would pass off in a perfectly religious spirit without any unseemliness whatsoever».

In spite of the proffered reasons, the petition was of no avail. On the 2nd of May ensued the sad decree: «The supplicants must give up the Passion Play, and are referred to the already issued edict with the additional clause, that, since it was a vow they must change it into some other form of worship, sermon, prayer or such-like in the service of God.

The Ammergauers did not rest satisfied with this resolution. In a new petition they applied to the Elector himself, in order to effect perhaps a change in the stern interdict with the help of the sympathetic *Max Joseph the Third*. This manuscript contains so to say everything that could be of favourable influence for the Oberammergau Passion Play from an historical, ethical, and even economical, standpoint.

As it may interest English readers, we give the original Old German text in full: —

*Durchleuchtigster Churfürst,
Gnedigster Herr Herr.*

Es ist eine Landtkündtliche sache, das alhier in Oberammergau die Passions-Tragödie seith 140 Jahren alle 10 Jahr auf öffentlichem Plaze mit gröster auffpütlichkeit exhibirt wird, welches zu Pfingsten heurigen Jahres wiederum zutrifft vnd worzu WÜR schon seith einen halben Jahr her alle Anstalten gemacht, auch bereits Vieles Geld Verwendet haben; indessen ist im Monath Aprill abhin ein Gnädigstes General-Mandat erlassen und Vermög solchen die aufführung der Passions-Tragödie wegen hin und wider eingeschlichenen Missbräuchen aller orthen abgeschafft worden.

Dieses hat vns bewogen beym Churfürstlichen, Hochloblichen Geistlichen Rath Vnderthänigst einzulangen vnd um Gnädigste Licenz zu bitten, solchen wenigst für heur noch einmahl auffuehren zu dörffen, Alleine WÜR sind vndern 2. currentis mit Vuserem Gesuch wider Verhoffen abgewisen worden.

Diese unerwartete abweisung kan in Rücksicht vnserer vnterthänigst Vorgetragenen Motiven keinen anderen Grund haben, als das ein Hohes Dicasterium nicht gleich fueg und Macht habe, dasienige abzuändern, was Eur Churfürstliche Durchlaucht in Höchster Persohn beschlossen haben, vnd eben diesertwegen vnderfangen WÜR vns dem höchsten Gesätzegeber, vnsere Gnädigsten Landtes-Vatter selbst anzugelen vnd in tieffester Unterthänigkeit Vorzutragen, wie das:

Imo die Passions-Tragedie in hiesigen orth mit der grössten Eingezogenheit und Frömigkeit aufgeföhret wird, wobey nicht die Geringste Müßbrauch geschehen noch gestattet, sondern auf das sorgfältigste Vermieden werden. Wir könten dieses erforderlichen fahls mit vielen Tausend Zeugnissen Bestärken. Es wird der Passion

ohne geringsten Tumult und nicht bey der Nacht oder Bey denen Lichteren, sondern Bey hell langen Tag, nicht in der Heyligen Char- sondern in der Pfingstwoche, nicht in der K reche, sondern auf freyem  ffentlichen Platz Vor dem Pfarr- und Freydhof aufgef hret, allwo anno 1740, 1750, 1760, 11 bis 12000 Persohnen in gr sser Ehrbarkeit frey dagestanden und zugesehen, welche von anwesend Geistlich und Weltlich Distinguirten Personen, nicht m nder von vnserer Gn digen Obrigkeit, dan von dem Pfarrhof und anderen h useren herab kopf f r kopf  berschen werden k nnen; so sind auch

2^{do} in dieser Trag die keine l cherlich, k ndisch und abgeschmackte Evolutionen oder Personagen, und zwar um so m nder zu erschen, als die haupt- und oast alle Persohnen Lauter solche M nner Vertretten, welche halb oder ganz Europa ausgereiset sind, mithin wohl zu Vnterscheiden wissen, was an anderen  rthen vor einf ltig und verwerflich gehalten wird, und was bey einer so heyiligen Vorstellung gangbar ist; welches eben

3^{tio} die haupts chlichste Ursache, dass diese Ammergauische seit 140 Jahren aufgef hrte und alle 10 Jahr eintreffente Exhibition dergestalten ber hmt geworden das von 20, 30 und noch mehr Meill Weegs, als aus Bayern, Tyroll, Schwaben und dem Reich, item aus den St tten M nchen, Freysing, Landtshut, Junspruckh, Augspurg und anderen  rthen nicht nur einf ltige Burger und Paurs-Leuthe, sondern auch in Adelichen Caracteurs stehente und Gelehrte Persohnen anhero eillen und diesem Geistlichen Spiell, ohne Ruhm zu melden, vnder viellen anpreisen mit aller Satisfaction und ieder zeit mit gr sserer Vergn genheit, als Syc gehofft h tten, ruhiglich Beywohnen; dahingegen

4^{ten} Auf den nicht verhofend nochmaligen abweisungsfahl vielle hundert, ja einige Tausend und vnder diesen auch vielle ansehnliche, in specie ausl ndische Persohnen, vergebentlich nacher Ammergau hercinreisen und ihr Geld umsonst verz hren wurden, welches zu viellen Murren und vnderschiedlichen Raisonement anlas geben derffte.

Wir wurden vns als getreu und Devoteste vnderthannen der Eingangs allegierten Gn digsten Verordnung, Respective Verboth, so schwer es vns auch immer ankommt, das Von vnseren Vorelteren und Vorfahreren gemachte Gel b zu brechen, nichts destoweniger willigist gef get haben, Wenn vns nur solches Beyl ufig zur Heyligen 3 K nigzeit kund gemacht worden w re. Nachdem Wir aber schon seith 6 Monnathen sovielle und importante Praeparatorien Vorgekehrt und mittls Verschickung der Exemplarien an die Entlegnere  rth vnser Invitation bereits gemacht haben, auch vielle aus vns, mit hindansetzung ihres Commercij und Handlschafft in Russland, Holland, Engcland, Pohlen, Welschland und Spanien, pur obbschriebener Verrichtungen halber zur ckgebliben sind, So k nte vns vnmassgebig wenigist Vor dissmahl um so mehr Gn digst Dispensiert werden, als denen M nchenrischen Statt-Musicanten die Passions-Trag die haupts chlich wegen bereits aufgewendet gehabt viellen vnk ssen Bey dem Faber-Pren bis an Palm-Sontag inclusive auff hren Zud rffen gn digst zugestanden worden.

Wir Bitten demnach vnderth nigst Gehorsamst, Euer Churf rstliche Durchlaucht wollen vns, unseren Kinderen und der ganzen Nachbarschaft wenigist f r heur noch diesen Trost lassen und die Passions-Tragedie in Beherzigung der Vordwaltenden Umst nde und bereits aufgewendet viellen Vnk ssen nur noch ein einziges

mahl ohne fernere Consequenz aufführen zu dörffen, Churmildest zuerlauben Geruhen, welches Wir hinfüro der Gnädigsten anbefchtung zu Folge willigist vnderlassen werden; in solch getröster anhoffnung Wir uns vnderthänigst Gehorsamst empfehlen. Euer Churfürstliche Durchlaucht etc.

*Underthänigst Gehorsambste
Sammentliche Gemeinde Zu Ober-Ammergau.*

A similar fate awaited this petition; the Elector approved of the resolution of the Council, and the «supplicating community of Ammergau» was notified in a rescript of the 22nd of May 1770 «that once and for all their petition was done with, and subsequent to the last formed gracious resolution their request had been refused».

The Ammergauers were more fortunate in 1780. After the Elector *Karl Theodor* had taken up the government (1778), the laws in respect to matters dealing with religious plays were less strictly enforced. The town-musicians of Munich, who in the middle of the 17th century had especially distinguished themselves in this sphere, then several market communities and towns, received again permission to perform, and «in a clever manner» represent, the Passion Tragedy as before, in Lent and even in the Passion Week. The favourable moment had in consequence arrived to again assert their claims to the good old custom.

In January 1780 another petition to this end was sent in by the Ammergauers. The times, when the colonel *Johann Kaspar Thurriegel*, son of a Bavarian farmer in the neighbourhood of Mittenfels, had persuaded thousands of his countrymen to emigrate to Spain, in order to people the depopulated Sierra Morena with new colonists, were only just gone by; those days, when the government in all earnestness feared «a depopulation and desolation» of Bavaria. To raise the general domestic welfare was now the aim of the government, and the Ammergauers understood to perfection how to utilize this tendency in their petition.

The document justly begins with the usual introduction about the origin of the Play. Then it continues: «*Das gelübd wurde Biss auf das 1770iste Jahr genauest Volzohen, in diesem Jahre hat uns das Vom hochlöblichen geistlichen Rath gnädigst ausgefertigte General-Mandat an fernern Volzug desselben gehemmet, indeme dieses allen Städt, Märckten und Dorfschafften auf dem Lande verbothen, in diesem, und so auch in denen zukünfftigen Jahren derley Passions-Spielle mehr aufzuführen. Wir fügten uns und liessen die Aufführung desselbigen, ohngeachtet, dass der Zeit-Punkt schon würcklich vorhanden und althierzu erforderliche anstatten bereits getroffen waren, aus Schuldgehorsamsten respect gegen den gnädigsten Mandat Bey seite*». Instead of the Passion prohibited by the general interdict, they had now drawn up another religious play entitled «*The Old and New Testament*», and had thoroughly purified it from all objectionable phrases, and ask therefore once and for all for the rights of performance. After bringing forward in favour of their case the reasons advanced in 1770, they sail straight into the sea of political economy.

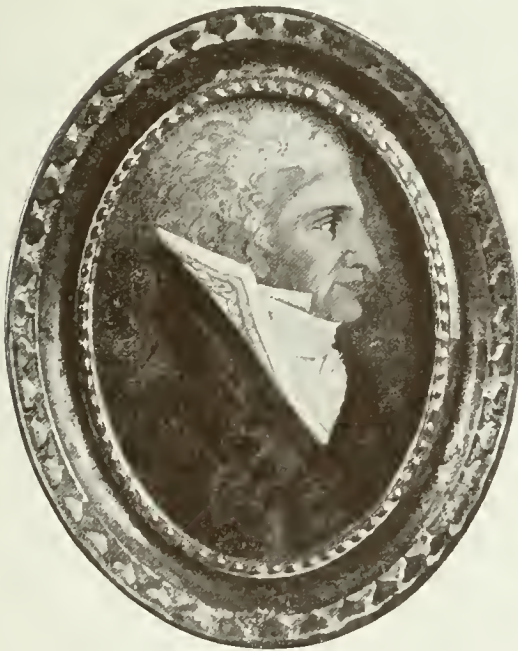
Drittens ist unser ort Oberammergau auf denen äussersten gränzen gegen Tyrott entlegen, welcher ausser solchen Vorfällen gar wenig, da aber sogar von denen weit entferntesten ausländern, nemlich unseren handlungss-Freunden aus

Inspruck, Potzen, Thirol, augspurg und Nürnberg in grosser Menge Besucht und dadurch dass Negotium immer mehr und mehr zum Nutzen der höchsten Intée selbst und unsren Inländischen Nachbarschaften Verbreitet wirdet» and

«Viertens seynd die Innwohner desselben meist Lautter Händler, und eben diese fast für beständig in fremden Ländern, als Spanien, Amerika, Russtand, dann der Schweiz und mehr villen anderen orten in negotien sich Befündente Mitgemeindere; seheten sehr gerne, dass nach ihrer ohnehin erst in 5, 7 und 9jährigen nacher hauss kaufft, dieses allschon zur zeit ihrer Vor- und gross-Elteren eingeführt und gemachte Verlobnus zur aufmunterung ihres Religions-Eyfer, dan zu mehreren Begrif für ihre Kinder und hauptsächlich zu ferner weiterer Verhütung alles Unheilss wider seinen schnlichst erwünschten Fortgang gewünnete». Und um ihre Andeutungen noch eindringlicher zu gestalten, fügen sie hinzu, dass «sicher Verlauten will, dass in mehrmaliger unterbleibung dessen sogar auch unsere vermelt meist in frembden Ländern sich aufhaltende Mitgemeinere selbst wenig, ja fast gar keinen Lust mehr zu Nachhausereise haben».

The authorities could not remain deaf to such forcible arguments. On the 8th of January 1780 a decree was issued to the government stating that the Elector «had had the play, handed in by the Oberammergau community, looked into and examined, and had at once graciously consented to the same, since nothing unseemly had been found in it, and for several other valid reasons contained in the accompanying supplication (meaning the petition just mentioned), that, furthermore, the same may be publicly performed every ten years without any hindrance».

The last fight which the Ammergauers had was in 1810, in order to be able to keep up their play in the *Kingdom* of Bavaria reformed under the ministry of Count *Montgelas* according to the principles of enlightened despotism, which ruthlessly cleared away religious customs, ceremonies and devices through which the pious feelings of past generations had found expression.



Count Montgelas.

The exceptional position granted to the community by the Elector *Karl Theodor* had so far been respected. When in 1791 the burghers of the market-town of Dachau applied for a license to hold religious plays, it was again on the 23rd of March generally forbidden «for the people in towns and market-places and in the country to perform any kind of tragic, dramatic, or musical play, spiritual or temporal, with the exception of the modest and duly-sanctioned school children's plays»; but on this occasion it was expressly stated that «the community of Oberammergau *per Modum Privilegii* already granted to them in 1780 still

retains the right to perform publicly and unhindered every ten years at Whitsuntide the drama entitled «*The Old and New Testament*».

The same preference was shown in the spring of 1794, when permission was granted to perform the so-called *Kreuzeschule*, which the community had pleaded for with the words «during these ten years (between two Passion representations) also *der Wanderer auf dem Wege des Kreutzes*, which according to the accompanying printed pamphlet and [the testimony of the Convent of Ettal was last time in 1785 performed by us with unusual approval and great benefit to the soul, at every Whitsuntide, to be performed again next year, 1795, for the general edification, all the more so, as at that time, on account of the lack of public sermons enjoining repentance, spiritual help and encouragement certainly seem necessary, especially for the young people».

It was different in the year 1801. On the 14th of September a new edict reminded the offi-



Georg Lang, in his twenty-sixth year, establisher of the wood-carving business of G. Lang sel. Erben; greatly advanced the carving industry of Ammergau.

of the authorities was not exactly encouraging. They simply turned the men away, intimating as a reason for their rough behaviour that the performance of such theatrical pieces had long been looked upon as being inconsistent with the dignity of religion, and had been everywhere forbidden by a general order of the governing body; that the purpose of utilizing the surplus of the profits for the school, as designed by the community of Oberammergau, could not excuse the unfitness of the contemplated means, and that the granting of their petition would give rise to a number of similar ones; it was however in no case advisable to let these performances be re-inaugurated after they had been prohibited for forty years and forgotten for the last ten years, because, though they might contain nothing unseemly in detail yet the idea upon which they are based is highly repellant».

cials by threatening them «with imprisonment and a fine of 30 Reichsthaler», of the former regulations issued against Passion Plays, and concurrent with this a decree of the free Convent Court of Murnau declared the privilege of the Oberammergauers to be null. Then the Passion year of 1810 drew near.

Again a deputation went from Ammergau to Munich to personally obtain permission for the continuance of the Play. The reception at the hands

In their trouble the deputation and their spokesman, the honest *Georg Lang*, applied to Geistl. Rath *Georg Anton Sambuga*, who formerly had himself filled the post of a simple country clergyman, and now spent his days out in the village of Neuhausen in peaceful retirement. The kindly old gentleman drew up a petition for the villagers, and used his influence in such a manner, that the good king *Max Joseph* gave on March 3rd 1811 the long wished-for permission for a thing which, harmless in itself, should be looked upon more as a «Volksfest».

Sambuga had previously been tutor to the Crown Prince, and when his pupil ascended the Bavarian throne as *Ludwig the First*, there arose for the Oberammergauers in the art-loving monarch, so sensible to the national characteristics, a warm-hearted patron of their Play; which also in the year 1830 was to find an advocate in *Goethe*, the old master held in such esteem by the Prince.

The dark days were now at an end, and in the then following years of peaceful development, the Ammergauers have under circumspect management and a continually increasing sympathy been able to bring the fulfilment of their vow from its former simplicity up to what the Play is to-day, — an event, which has carried the name of the little village in the Bavarian mountains far out into all lands.» Thus far Karl Trautmann.

With the history of the Passion Play I have anticipated the course of historical events. At the beginning of the 17th century we find a well-organised community in Ammergau. A school had been founded; we find that precautions had been taken by the parish council against vagrants, wild beasts, and inundations. As medical officer of health a barber was appointed with a salary of 7 florins a year! A special inspector looked after the water supply; rates and taxes were on a fixed scale, and if you read the records of that time you cannot admire enough, how carefully and how sensibly all arrangements were made, and I must say it almost appears as if Ammergau has not progressed in all these things in the same degree during the 19th century.

Traffic on the «Rottstrasse» was already at the beginning of the 17th century in its decline. The unsettled times paralysed trade; the roads were deserted, for their insecurity discouraged the merchants from sending large quantities of goods; but on the other hand carving flourished to a high degree, especially in the families of Eyrl, Ruez, Feistenmantel and Nay.

How important the profession of carving at that time was, is to be seen from the fact that the territorial jurisdiction was led to adjust the same, with regulations of its own, by founding a *Handwerksordnung* for carvers. The four jurisdictions, or rather the carvers through them, protested against the title *Handwerksordnung*, as they did not wish to have their art looked upon as a trade, and brought the matter before the electoral court-councillor, who decided that the title should be altered into *Bildschnitzereiordnung* and that carving (*Bildschnitzerei*) should be considered a *profession*. This decision was confirmed by the Electoral *Revisorium* on January 5th 1682.

The last ten years of the 17th and first ten years of the 18th century brought continual war, under the government of the valiant Elector Max Emanuel, and



„Kappel“ near Unterammergau.
Chapel of the Holy Blood. Principal church of the district.

under which the Ammergauers suffered severely. The endless marching through of troops, and their keep, was a great expense to the community, and a number of the young villagers were pressed into service for the defence of the country. As a result of the Spanish War of Succession the Tyrolese made continual inroads from Scharnitz and Mittenwald. Fortifications were thrown up

between Oberau and Farchant from mountain to mountain, and the whole population of the surrounding villages took up arms to drive away the enemy. In those expeditions the ancient chapel in Kappel was despoiled and plundered, and the «holy blood» presented by the Duchess Judintha in 1090 was thrown away. Ettal and Oberammergau were several times plundered, then came the expulsion of the Elector, and several hard years under Austrian rule, under which however the Ammergauers suffered little, because they remained quiet, and at last in 1715, hailed with joy by all, the return of the hereditary Elector. With him returned also years of rest and peace, in which trade and industry again flourished. Especially wood-carving revived with redoubled vigour, the trade of Ammergau in holy images, crucifixes of wood, wax and clay soon spread into all parts of the world.

In St. Petersburg the establishment of Hett and Daser grew apace; in Copenhagen, Gothenburg and Drontheim those of Linder and Hohenleitter, Veit and Echtler; in Cadiz of Bauhofer, Sam and Hohenleitter; in Bremen and Holland of Bauhofer and Faistenmantel, in Gröningen and Amsterdam of the Buchwiesers.

All these merchants attained to great wealth, and were the means of profitably dispensing of the products of their native village. Most of them had their own houses there, and retired in the evening of their life to their peaceful native valley, where they related to their fellow-citizens tales from the rich store of their experiences. It is a pleasing picture, this industrious and artistic folk, with its stubborn spirit of enterprise, which brings it an ensured prosperity; and with its faithful attachment to its native home which always leads it back to its quiet village, to its spiritual aim in life, the Passion Play.

Unfortunately the growing prosperity was again put an end to, the forties brought war anew, which the Bavarian Elector *Karl Albert* began about his hereditary Austrian lands. Up to the year 1746 the Ammergauers had to suffer from the troubles of war, so that in consequence many inhabitants were reduced to poverty.



Father, 53 years old.



Mother, 47 years old.



Son, 21 years old.



Daughter, 18 years old.

Oberammergau Family of the year 1785.

From old oil-paintings by «Lüftmaler» F. Zwick.

These four pictures of an Ammergau family of the year 1785 best show that the Ammergauers of olden times were by no means peasants; regular peasant costumes, such as are in vogue in other country places, were only worn by peasants who carried on cattle-breeding and agriculture, who also to the present day have retained the high fur-caps and puff-sleeves. The carvers and merchants however wore town dress, as was the fashion elsewhere.

Added to this came a failure of the crops in 1740, in the following year a rise in prices, in later years many successive devastating fires, which reduced half the village to ashes, and then by way of change frightful floods through the mountain torrent, the Laine. The necessary measures taken against these devastations by inundation, as well as the repairs of damage done thereby, swallowed up vast sums, which the community could scarcely levy. Then in the first half of the seventies came again repeatedly bad harvests and high prices. In the nineties war came again, marchings through of French and imperial troops and finally in 1800 the siege and plunder of the village by the French. The Austrians under General Grüne, with the Tyrolese riflemen who held the village and the mountain passes, retired before superior forces and abandoned

Ammergau, Captain Vauthier de Baillamont of the «Manfredini»-regiment, who held out longer, was taken prisoner by the French near



Baron Vauthier, Officer in the Austrian regiment «Manfredini».

village, which had no supplies from outside and was divested of all sources of help. The Ammergau carving industry however suffered the heaviest blow through the competition of the Grödnern, who immensely energetic as they were, themselves traded their goods in every direction, and probably could, like the Swiss of to-day with their carved goods, work cheaper and in a wholesale way. Towards the close of the century one hundred and fifty Grödnern firms could be counted in Europe, and only a few Ammergauers were partners in outside firms. Certainly, enterprising men, like the Brothers Lang, started a business in the place itself and formed connections with outside houses, but the continued wars also paralysed these enterprises, and the new century dawned over Ammergau, sad and foreboding.

Ettal. Baron Vauthier, a native of the Netherlands, later on often visited Ammergau, and in 1850 gave a fund to the local church for alms-giving and for a mass to be read for the fallen soldiers of his regiment (imp. royal 12th inf. reg. Archduke Wilhelm, formerly Marquis Manfredini).

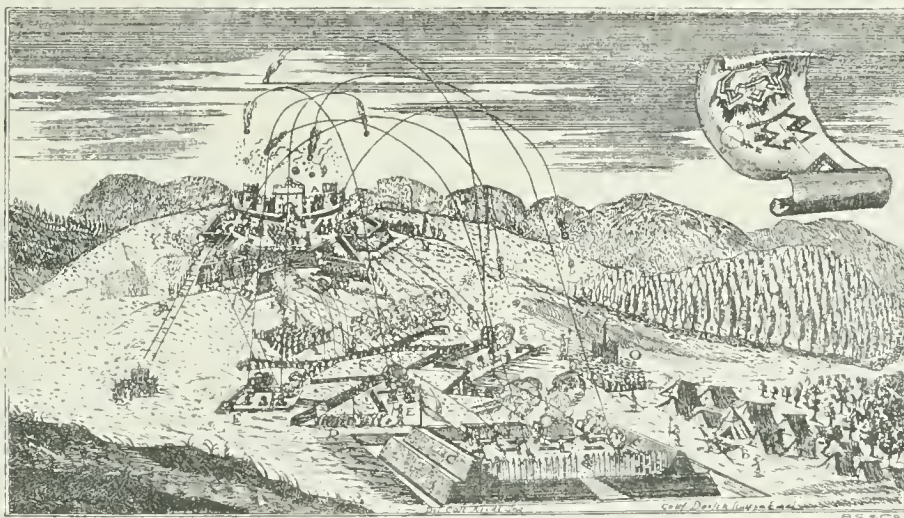
All these occurrences tended to ruin the remote

The course of history is a strange thing, it does not proceed regularly step by step, it does not develop careers organically, so that they gradually increase in themselves, it takes a sort of zig-zag way, and goes from one extreme to the other and generally *overshoots* the mark.

We find this to be the case everywhere when we follow past history, to-day the strictest ultra-conservative spirit, to-morrow its extreme, the most far-reaching liberalism, unlimited independence, and the day after a complete reaction again. Thus in Bavaria an anticlerical tendency bordering on iconoclasm had taken the

Entwurf /
Der von einer Hochadlichen Ritter-Academie zu Ettal, von denen die
 Architecture Militaire alsda erlehrenden Herrn Herrn Cavaliers, nach Jährlicher Gewohnheit ge-
 haltenen Fuß-Attaque, und eines / um aufgeworffenen Preiß vorgenommenen Artillerie-Exercice. 1. Sept. 1734.

A. Das Castell. B. Das Lager C. Haupt Batterie D. Approchen E. Batteries à Mortiers F. Communications Linie G. Parallele H. Erster Angriff. I. Erster Contre-Mitac. K. Erster Ausfall. L. Erster Succurs M. Anderer Contre-Mitac. N. Anderer Ausfall O. Anderer Succurs. P. Eroberung der Außenwerke. Q. Capitulation.



Der Anfang dieses Militäire- und Artillerie-Exercice, wird unter Anführung des (nöl.) Herrn Grafen von Hohenstein / 16. als General, durch den in 3. Colonnen formierten Aufzug / sambt Mitführung der Artillerie / auf den außgestellten Waffen-Platz gemacht / worauff mit drey-mahligem Salve, und Auswerffung der Granaden, das gewöhnliche Granadiers-Exercice, und nach diesem das gewöhnliche Stuck-Schreiben Schießen vor sich gehet. Worunter 2. Colonnen in das nach der Ordnung aufgeschlagene Lager / die dritte Colonne aber sich in das Castell ziehet mit alsobald nachfolgender

A T T A Q U E

From an old engraving by Gottfried Dorsch in Ettal, in the possession of Capt. E. Lang in Würzburg.

place of the strict clerical sway of the Jesuits under Montgelas' ministry. The old Ettal was still in full bloom. In 1711 a *Ritterakademie* with a school was founded there, which was frequented by the cream of the Bavarian and Austrian aristocracy. Not only were foreign teachers in all branches of learning obtained, but also instructors in fencing, riding, and gymnastics, and professors in military science were appointed. When coming from Oberau, before you enter the village, you can still see the intrenchments which the young knights had dug for their sham-fights, and once every year a great fête was held with military manœuvres, distribution of prizes, and theatrical performances, to see which, the most important people from Munich and the neighbouring estates came to Ettal. An engraving shows us such a sham-fight, as fought by the young knights in 1734.

Through the Austrian War of Succession in 1740 the *Akademie* rapidly declined, and finally completely died out. The government, impoverished by the war, had long had an eye on the rich convent property, and now occurred an almost incredible thing — an act of brutal despotism, such as had never happened in any *Protestant* country since the Reformation — the secularisation of the convents.

In March 1803 commissioners appeared, who announced to ancient Ettal its dissolution, and by April 1st all monks and convent-clergy had to be out of Ettal. An abode of culture of almost a thousand years standing laid waste by one word! There arose a wailing and lamentation of the poor villagers of the neighbourhood, who had suffered such severe losses by the war and the misfortunes of the last centuries, and who had lost in the convent, which had always been a kind of foster-mother to them, their last support. Heartrending was the leave-taking of the aged monks, who had to depart from the well-loved scenes of their labours, from their well-loved peaceful mountain-home. Many, like the old abbot *Alphons Hafner* who died of a broken heart in Venice on the island of St. Giorgio Maggiore, left the country; others, like the Prebendary of Rottenbuch, *Herkulan Schwaiger* and his two friends, settled down in the neighbourhood, so as to at least breathe their native air. The valuables of the convent were practically thrown away at ridiculously low prices, the domains sold by auction, far under value. Dr. Andreas Buchner repeats in his historical work the description by a Protestant and non-Bavarian, the *Consistorial- und Schulrath K. Adolf Menzel* in Breslau, who in his modern history of Germany, in the 12th vol. Part II, page 343, writes the following:

“In Bavaria, where the pupils of the Order of Illuminati were at the helm, the dissolution of clerical foundations and convents was carried out most pitilessly. Hundreds of sheriffs and bailiffs set out in all directions in order to confiscate the booty; the kitchens and cellars were closed to the former owners, the farm hands and the servants dismissed, now and again even the wardrobes sealed up, and the clerical residences filled with workmen who were to make the necessary alterations for the reception of government officials. The commissioners however laid most weight upon the sale of all the objects they came across. Jewelry, church plate, horses, carriages, furniture, buildings, farms, ploughed land, meadows, forests, etc., were offered for sale all over the country, and were often hurriedly knocked down to the advantage of favoured individual bidders. At the public auction, Jews dressed themselves up in bishop's vestments and profaned the sacred vessels, chalices were broken, monstrances robbed of their most valuable stones, clasps and hinges torn off the mass-books, pluvials cut up for chair covers, bodies of Saints stripped and hidden away under the eaves, and many beautiful churches destroyed, whenever the wood, iron and stone in detail would fetch a higher price than the buildings as a whole, or when the latter could not be turned to profane uses, like for instance the church of St. Anna in Würzburg which had been turned into a theatre, and the fine church in Herrnschmensee into a brewery. No care, or at least extremely little, was taken of monuments, archives or libraries, even the tomb of the Wittelsbachers in the convent church of Scheyern was not spared. Compare also Bavaria under the rule of the minister Montgelas”.

How the treasures of the convent library of Ettal were handled, many old people, a few years back, could tell of, who saw how they loaded the valuable old folios and manuscripts and took them to Munich in open carts, so that several books fell between the rails on to the ground, and were picked up by passers-by. All the many lesser folk, who had their employment and work in Ettal, were now penniless; Ammergau ceased to be the seat of a judicial court, which was a great loss. Traffic on the «Rottstrasse» and the goods-transport decreased on account of new trade routes recently opened up. The possibility of educating their sons at home with little means was taken from the people, and the poor and needy had no help in affliction.



Oberammergau in the year 1820.
From an old picture in the possession of J. Ledermann in Oberammergau.

And now the Passion Play, which had already rescued Oberammergau from plague and pestilence, was their last hope. The first fifteen years of the century passed amidst the horrible disorders of the wars of Napoleon. French and Tyrolese, all came down on the poor village, robbed and oppressed it, and every batch of troops that came through left the people poorer than ever.

In 1812 eleven lads marched along with the troops from Oberammergau to Russia and only three of them returned. In 1813—14 four Ammergauers died for their country.

The Ammergauers exercised themselves diligently in the use of arms and formed a company of their own, the 3^d National Guard, so as to, if necessary, answer the call of their country. The end of the wars again brought about a great scarcity, then came failure of the crops and such a famine that the wretched people had to eat the grass of the fields, snails, and bran. Then it was that the prelate *Herkulan Schwaiger*, formerly prebendary of Rottenbuch, who now had his abode in Ammergau, caused corn to be brought from afar, ground, and the flour distributed among the poor.

In the year 1830 the Passion Play, hitherto performed in the cemetery, was now played outside the village on the present site. With this it lost to a certain extent its intimate character, and became world-renowned.

In 1831 King Ludwig I came to the village, to the great joy of his subjects.

Already in 1840 an enormous number of people flocked to the Play, so that the theatre, although built to contain eight thousand people, did not possess seats enough, and the Play had to be repeated several times.

The merit has been wrongly ascribed to *Eduard Devrient* of having in 1850 first called the attention of wider circles to the Play; for *Ludwig Steub* and *Guido*



Oberammergau in the year 1840.

From an old picture in the possession of Guido Lang in Oberammergau.

Görres had already in 1840 written an account of it, which was as complete and comprehensive as it was enthusiastic, and a French account from the pen of the *Baron de Roisin* appeared at the same time. From now on, the number of the visitors to the Play increased with every Passion-year, crowds of people poured into the peaceful village. Kings and princes appear in the carvers' cottages and gaze upon the wonder, which has survived through olden times up to the present day. In 1850 and 1860 King Max and his noble consort attended the Play. The royal couple had a great liking for the village, and every year, both before and after ascending the throne, spent several weeks there with the court. The war of the year 1870 interrupted the performances. The village youth had again to fight for their country, and they did it with the enthusiasm which fills the Ammergauer's patriotic soul on all great occasions. Joseph Mayr, who took the part of Christ, had also to take his place in the ranks, but through the graciousness of the king was permitted to remain in Munich, and to retain his long locks. At the close of the war the Play was continued in 1871, and though all had not returned, but were taking part in the

heavenly «Passion», yet the Play did not suffer on that account. On the 25th of September the community had the great pleasure of giving a separate performance before their beloved King Ludwig II. Strongly affected by it, the noble sovereign invited the chief actors to his place at Linderhof, where he royally entertained them, and for each one

had a friendly word and solicitous interest. Old Lechner, who acted as Judas in 1850, '60, '71 and '80, used to relate in a fine manner how the King looked at him with his glowing eyes, as if he would read his soul, and said to him: «Judas, what were your feelings when you betrayed the Lord?» The old man used to shudder at the very remem-

the old-fashioned forms, the scanty knowledge of anatomy, and the complete lack of new and original ideas. The continual wars had, as already mentioned, done much damage here, and now the nineteenth century, with the opening up of the new trade routes, and with the introduction of the railway, had condemned the peaceful mountain village during the ten years between each Play to a seclusion, which robbed the dwellers on the great Rottstrasse, a road open to international commerce, of the prominent position which they had taken in trade. Added to this the merchants stupidly

brance of it, as if he really had been Judas, and I am convinced, his pious, faithful soul has prayed many a time to the Lord to forgive him for having had, even in pretence, to betray his Master.

Unfortunately the progress of the carving industry did not keep pace with that of the Play.

As late as 1840 Ludwig Steub deplores



King Max II of Bavaria.



King Max II and his consort Queen Marie driving in the Bavarian mountains.

refused the offer of the government to take over the management and support the parish school of drawing and carving, whereupon the government founded a carving-school in Partenkirchen and thereby opened up in the immediate neighbourhood a dangerous competition for the Ammergauers. Besides this came into external trade the competition of the cheaper and more pleasing, but less artistic, Swiss carvings, which being more accessible to the general public soon flooded the market.

Only after the year '80, after the gigantic success of the Passion Play had somewhat lessened the burden of debts, which the village still had to bear from their bad days, and the carving-school had been subvened by the government,



The old Linderhof as it originally was.

were the attempts of the extremely able and artistic director of the school, Ludwig Lang, and of a few of the business owners successful in infusing a new spirit into the carving industry. New patterns, in modern style, were designed, more interesting forms discovered, more value set on the study of anatomy, and in particular they endeavoured to give the children a thorough grounding in drawing. Whoever knows what it means to teach hands, which do hard work in the fields, to guide pencil and compass, knows too what a mine of patience a man must have to dedicate himself to this work. Well, our friend the never changing Ludwig Lang, over whom time passes without visible traces, has been able to learn patience during his activity extending over a generation, and has always with the same unselfishness placed his masterly energies in the service of his native parish. They have also in latter years given more attention to ecclesiastic art; the present proprietor of the firm of Georg Lang sel. Erben, *Guido Lang*, has erected in his house a studio of his own and fine exhibition rooms, of church ornaments. One may say therefore, that the Ammergau carving industry again stands, in the quality of

its productions and in its connections, as high as it did at the beginning of the eighteenth century. It must be gratefully acknowledged, that the government seeks to promote and further the community in every way, and the chief of the district official court, *Völk*, has especially rendered great service to Ammergau.

On the 20th of April 1883 a heavy blow struck the community, the loss of their «good spirit», the last link between the past and the present, the Geistl. Rath Daisenberger. From the year 1845 until his death he belonged to the community primarily as pastor (*Seelsorger*), then as a faithful and friendly counsellor. I shall later describe more fully the noble character of this man.



Schloss Linderhof.

The greatest grief however for the Ammergauers was the death of their beloved King Ludwig II in the year 1886. There was not one, who, at the death of this Prince, did not feel as if a member of his own family had been taken from him. To them it was not the King of Bavaria, who lived far away in his capital, whom they scarcely knew — it was *their* King, *their* own, dear King, who belonged to them, to them alone! He lived with them in their mountains, he loved their mountains as they themselves did; his buildings gave them employment and prosperity, and whoever was at work in the *Schloss* always received a friendly word, or some little favour from him. How often did he not have a simple workman called in, talked with him and sent him away with rich gifts. No wonder, that, when the news of his detention came, and it was said that he was to be brought to Linderhof, the whole country folk intended to rise as one man, to rescue him, who was more a friend than a ruler to them.

It was impossible; on St. Anthony's day came the news of his death, which the priest read out from the pulpit, and which was received by the faithful people with passionate sobs. Time has eased also this sorrow, but the memory of the wondrous King lives unforgotten in the hearts of the loyal people. To the mountain folk he is not dead — he still lives in some hidden spot, and on peaceful moonlight nights he drives as of yore along the lonely mountain roads. The

outriders wave their torches, the hoofs of the horses beat at a furious pace on the stony road, and so the lonely Prince passes nightly through the mountains to see if hearts are still beating for him.

Yes, they are still loyal, the hearts of the Bavarians, the *dead* King remains unforgotten by them, but they are faithful for all that to their *living* Prince Regent. For several years the Prince Regent Luitpold has had his hunting grounds in Ammergau, which is so bound up in joy and sorrow with

believe that any one who chanced to meet our gracious ruler would take him for a weather-beaten mountaineer rather than for His Royal Highness. In latter years during the stay of the Prinz Regent in Linderhof the Ammergau musicians have repeatedly been honoured with permission to serenade the Prince. And if perhaps at first stirred by sad recollections — they are conscious of one thing, here also in their noble Regent they have a *father*, and they have found the way to *his* heart.

I now close my short retrospect of the history of Ammergau. Although much may have in the course of ages crumbled away from the outward form,



His Royal Highness the Prince Regent Luitpold of Bavaria, out chamois hunting.

the house of Wittelsbach, and he has won all hearts, this royal Prince, by his true, sincere and natural manners. And he too loves the mountains, and knows so well how to chat with the people, and what pleases them:

« *Daher kemma thuat er — grad a so schiech als wie'n a Holzer* ». (He turns up — just like any ordinary woodman.) And they are not wrong, you cannot imagine anything more picturesque than our noble liege-lord in mountain costume — it is like a picture of Defregger's, and I

which once gave
Ammergau its
historical interest,
the spirit has re-
mained, which
unceasingly puts
forth new buds.
I conclude with
the touching
poem of an old
Ammergaufer of
the time of the
fifties, through
which runs the
lament of depart-
ed glories, and
which yet ends so comfortingly:



Deer in Winter.
(From the hunting-ground of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent of Bavaria.)

*Aus gar vielen Samenbröschchen
Wächst die grüne Lebensau;
Einen Busch von Alpenröschchen
Holt' ich mir im Morgentau.*

*Hoch auf blauer Bergeskuppe
Siehst du, wie ein Kreuzlein schwankt;
Tausend Jahr' die Blüten-Gruppe
Ruhig seinen Fuss umrankt.*

*Desshalb auch sind ihre Säume
Noch vom frohen Duft umweht,
Oft versank in schöne Träume
Dort ein Bergsohn im Gebet.*

*Lass es du dich nicht erbittern,
Dass entweilt ein heil'ger Ort;
Sieh, das Kreuzlein will verwittern,
Doch die Rosen blühen fort!*



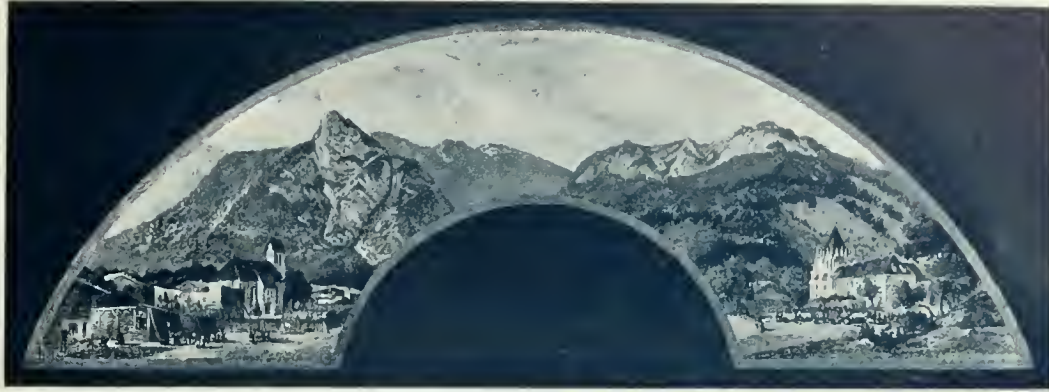
Prologus.

Lail und quod lail ist allin,
 p^ug allin die de p^unt lail amblat^uin,
 G^um^undig in ist p^ustliche G^up^uer,
 In G^und lail amblat^uin G^um^undig,
 G^und lail: G^um^undig p^ustliche G^up^uer,
 und lail amblat^uin p^ustliche lail G^und,
 G^um^undig, G^up^uer, G^um^undig und O^undig,
 allin die p^ustliche G^um^undig p^ustliche,
 Und die G^um^undig lail p^ustliche amblat^uin,
 In p^ustliche lail amblat^uin lail p^ustliche,
 So amblat^uin die de p^ustliche amblat^uin,
 und lail amblat^uin p^ustliche lail p^ustliche,
 G^um^undig lail p^ustliche G^up^uer,
 G^um^undig lail G^up^uer, G^um^undig lail amblat^uin,
 G^um^undig p^ustliche, lail amblat^uin,
 ist lail amblat^uin die de lail amblat^uin,
 und amblat^uin die ganze G^up^uer,
 und lail amblat^uin G^um^undig p^ustliche,
 Und lail amblat^uin lail amblat^uin G^up^uer,
 und lail amblat^uin lail amblat^uin lail amblat^uin,
 Und lail amblat^uin lail amblat^uin lail amblat^uin,
 und lail amblat^uin lail amblat^uin lail amblat^uin.

lail amblat^uin

Facsimile of the first page of the Text of the oldest Ammergau Passion Play of the year 1662.

(The original manuscript is in the possession of the firm of G. Lang sel. Erben, Oberammergau.)



Oberammergau with the Passion Theatre in 1631.

The original picture is the work of the scene-painter Mettenleitner of Munich, and is in the new Passion Theatre in Oberammergau.

The Evolution of the Passion Play and Text.

When we come to look into the evolution of the Passion Play from its very first beginning up to our time, then the question will arise: «How old is the Oberammergau Passion Play?» We know that the same was mentioned for the first time incidental to the solemn promise made at the time of the Plague in 1663 — we hear then further that the first performance took place in 1634. The otherwise somewhat incomplete chronicle does not inform us more definitely, and there is no text of that date anymore extant, the oldest still existing text bears at the end the note: «*Wiederumb renoviert und beschriben worden, im Jahre nach der Gnadenreich Geburt Christi 1662*» (Again revised and re-written in the year of grace 1662), and is therefore considerably later than the first representation in 1634. But it is also very probable, that, as in other places, the Passion Play had been performed much earlier, perhaps as far back as the 15th century. This idea is, according to Dr. Holland, supported by the fact that the chronicle of the Play treats of it as being something quite self-evident and of long standing. Considering that the history of the Play is recorded even down to the name of the bearer of the infectious disease, one would be inclined to think that the Passion Play as a remarkable and little known thing would be more fully described. The chronicle however only speaks of *the* Passion Play, as of something traditional,

which completely lacks the interest of novelty. Furthermore Dr. Holland asserts as additional proof for the correctness of his views, the celerity with which the vow was fulfilled. In the autumn of 1633 the performance was decided upon, and as early as in the spring of 1634 was put on the stage, that is to say after a space of barely nine months.

Now Dr. Holland rightly says:

«Whoever knows, what long years of trouble and experience precede the production of a piece with several hundred actors, will understand that the Ammergauers could not all at once have hit upon the idea of wanting to perform such a thing suddenly; which, with a people totally inexperienced in such matters, would have been impossible».

Dr. Aug.

Hartmann's mi-

the Weilheim Passion Play by the priest Johann Aelbl, about the year 1600, were pasted in.

Now I have already indicated in the historical part, what a lively intercourse existed between Augsburg and Ammergau. In the 15th century the settling of the Arzat families of Ammergau in Augsburg and Nuremberg resulted in the foundation of a benefice for early mass, which was occupied by relations of the founders, up



Sebastian Wild Meistersinger in Augsburg as herald.

(From an old original in the royal court and state library in Munich.)

nute examination of the text has confirmed our views. Dr. Hartmann has submitted the Passion Text of 1662 to a thorough investigation, and thereby found that for the greater part the contents of the same belong to a Play, which already originated in the 15th century, and was preserved in the convent of St. Ulrich and Afra in Augsburg.

Later on parts of a Passion Text by Sebastian Wild, *Meistersinger* in Augsburg, middle of the 16th century, were added. Considerably later slips of paper with passages from

to the 18th century. One of these latter was the canon of the convent St. Moriz in Augsburg. It is quite supposable, that through these connections the text of St. Ulrich and Afra had already been brought to Ammergau and been represented there. The performances have then perhaps come to a standstill through the invasions of the Swedish wars, through the Plague and other calamities; the entire text was probably destroyed when the priest's house was burnt down in 1620. It was then perhaps partly restored from still existing parts or from what former actors still remembered, and touched up after Wild's Play, but not till later, after new insertions from the Weilheim Play had been resolved upon, was the whole revised, and the Passion Text now lying before me is the new copy of 1662.

If the Ammergauers had had no Passion Play until 1634, it would hardly be imaginable that they would have fallen back upon a text, which had been written almost two centuries before, and must therefore be already antiquated in language and conception. Trautmann's assertion that the Ammergau Passion Play of to-day is no production of the people, «but a last shoot of the Jesuitic drama of the Counter-Reformation» falls in the face of this to the ground. How Trautmann, who knew the springs which have watered the roots of the Passion Tree up to our time, could have arrived at such a conclusion, is to me simply incomprehensible.

The mere fact that a Benedictine Father has re-modelled the text in the style of the then dominant Jesuitic comedies, and that this text was in use for 20 years, or the chance resemblance of the Ammergau to the Jesuitic stage, does not justify the supposition that the Play was entirely an outcome of Jesuitic art. The adaptation of Father *Rosner* was performed in 1750 and 1760, but already in 1780 it was simplified and altered by Father *Magnus Knipfelberger*, since in its bombastic style it did not suit the Ammergau spirit. The composition of Father *Ottmar Weiss* is so simple, and characteristic of the people, and is so entirely in keeping with the plain style of the Gospel and the old Text, that any inclination towards the Jesuitic manner of writing was quite out of the question.

It stands to reason that the Passion Text must also adapt itself to modern ideas. To us and our refined taste a Passion Play in Middle-age doggerel, such as for instance Prof *Sepp* aims at, would be a desecration of the sacred subject, for we do not want to see a sample of Middle-Age art, such as from time to time is given in our theatres as an historical curiosity, the subject is too sacred for such an experiment, but we want the sacred history, we want to see the suffering and death of our Redeemer in a form, which speaks more to our inmost feelings than the mere relating of the same. We look with pleasure at a genuine old picture in its naive conception of sacred things. But were a modern artist to paint so, it would appear profane to us. That which moves us in the naive ignorance of the Middle-ages, becomes unpleasant to us with our civilized, we might say over-civilized, spirit of modern times.

That the form of the Passion Play is more effective the plainer, simpler, the more nationally characteristic it is, has been perceived by Father *Ottmar Weiss* and his pupil the pastor *Daisenberger*. The Passion Text in its simple, biblical truthfulness, in its easy intelligibleness is so beautiful, so suited to the requirements of the people, that every alteration of the same other than shortening some of the passages or such like can only be considered as artificial and misplaced.

Therefore the Passion Play is and remains, in spite of assertions to the contrary, a production of the people. If a community wishes to found an endowment, for example stations of the Cross for a church, they will go to a sculptor and get him to work for them, provided that they themselves have not one at their disposal — now it will never occur to anyone to say that this endowment has not proceeded from the people, simply because the work has been done by an outsider. It was assuredly the religious impulse of the people that produced it, it was their money that carried it through.

Thus the Ammergau Passion Play in its entirety is to be traced to the strong faith of the people — just as much as its performance is to be ascribed wholly and solely to the activity of the villagers. When by chance the community, who did not possess a poet, had a Text re-constructed by a neighbourly Pater, whereby they went very critically to work and had their own definite wishes, one cannot on that account maintain that the Passion Play was not fully and entirely their spiritual property. Added to this is the fact that, just in that district between the convents of Rottenbuch and Ettal, we nowhere find even the slightest traces of the Reformation, nor any noticeable influences of the Counter Reformation. This whole neighbourhood forms so to say a permanent bulwark of faith. The influence of the conservative and respected Benedictines ensured a quiet, undisturbed life of faith, which was subjected to no sudden changes. Possibly, at the time when Ettal was a «Ritterakademie» and instructors from all parts were nominated, the Jesuits gained greater influence — in Oberammergau it has at the most only been temporary, in no case has it had more than a superficial influence on the Passion Play. I by no means ignore the great importance of the Counter-Reformation, especially in Bavaria, where it has created such magnificent works. But I would not set it up as universal mistress, as Trautmann does, for we must not forget, that the highest pinnacle of Catholic art had already been reached when the Order of the Jesuits had just been founded. In my eyes the art of the Jesuits had above all one disadvantage, it was not *German*, and destroyed everything which the German spirit of the Middle-Ages had matured, with a certain want of considerateness. How many glorious monuments of the Middle-Ages have been ruined under the obtrusive white stucco of the baroque style. Nor was the *dramatic* art of the Jesuits German, and it certainly was not naive. It was not the involuntary expression of the trustful spirit of the people — it was a designing art, designed to win over the people. It wanted to utilize that, which in the Middle-Ages was only the outcome of already existing enthusiastic religious faith, to quicken that faith, to win it back through the power of superior minds, combined with outward magnificence, and with sensual splendour, that factor of Catholicism which the Reformation had so shaken. That was their well thought-out plan.

When we examine the Passion Text of St. Ulrich and Afra edited by Dr *August Hartmann*, about which the learned *Placidus Braun* says:

«*Passio Domini in lingua vulgari*», it is at once clear to us, that we are concerned here with genuine Middle-Age poesy. I would not say *folk*-poesy, for the language is so noble, and, in part, of such delicacy of sentiment, that it reminds us more of the best days of the earliest minnesingers than of the uncomely folk-poesy of the time of *Hans Sachs*. I must confess, that some of the passages in this text,

which unfortunately are no longer included in the Ammergau Passion Text, have taken a strong hold of me, and I cannot refrain from introducing them to the Reader's notice.

One part is that, where Mary stands beneath the Cross after the Crucifixion of Christ, and, looking up to her son, says:

»*Maria stat vnterm creitz sprechend:*

*O we, mein Kind wie bist erblichen
Vnd von mir so hoch entwichen,
das ich dich nit erlangen kan!
nun helft mir bitten, frauen und man,
das sich das creitz ain wenig naig*

*Vnd mir mein Kind sein wunden zaig.
Vnd ich mich lab mit seinem Blut!
so wirt mein trost ain wenig gut.*
— — — — —

The other passage that I should like to quote and which also is partly included in the Text of 1662, is the simply wonderfully tender and moving scene of the Descent from the Cross: Joseph of Arimathæa has gone to Pilate to ask for permission to remove Jesus, or as it stands in the old Text «ihesu» from the Cross, which was granted him.

»*Pylatus zu ihesu* (must be incorrectly written, should be *Joseph*):

*So gant hin und nempt in herab
Den Leib ihesu beuelcht dem Grab.*

I now give the scene, which in the old Text is as follows:

»*Darnach gaht joseph und Nicodemus wiederumb zu dem creitz und spricht
Joseph zu maria der mutter Gottes*

*Got griess dich, Maria hochgeborn!
deines Kindes tod thut mir zorn*

*Und deines Hertzen bitterkait
ist mir in meinem Hertzen laid.*

*Yetz nimpt joseph und nicodemus den Leib ihesu von dem creitz vnd legent
in Maria auf ir schos, so spricht Maria.*

*O we, du hertzen liebes Kind!
deine augen erblichen sind.
O we, du rosenfarber mund,
wie blaich bist du an dieser stund!
O we, du hertzen lieber sun
muss ich mich dein verwegen (entschlagen) nun?
Du mochtest mir nit lebend werden,*

*so kumpst mir nymmer in die erden.
Ich will dich toten geren han
ich mag dich also nit verlan.
O hertzen trost mein ainiger sun,
mein Augen raid vnd liechte wun!
O solt ich tod sein für dich hie,
kain ding das tüt ich gerner nie.*

Johannes zu Maria

*Maria, reine maget hör!
thu das durch reiner frauen er:
Entzeuch dir selb die grosse clag,
seid es nit anderst gesein mag!*

*Lass mich dein ainig Kind nun sein
vnd bis (sei) du auch die Mutter mein!
Gedenk dass er das schuf im Tod
da er da stund in grosser not!*

Now they press round the Mother, who plunged in grief will not give up the Body of her Son, and beg of her:

*Maria sich: die Nacht gat her
thu das durch aller frauen er*

*Ee das es zu finster werd
benelthen lass in nun der Erd!*

Also Mary the wife of Cleophas and Mary Salome unite in entreating the grief-stricken Mother, the latter with the fine words:

*Eya, raine geerte Frau
Wann ich dir gantzlich das vertran:
Du thust so ybel nit an dir*

Joseph to Mary

*Lass dich edle Frau erbitten
du kast iumers guug erlitten;
Gib mir yetz her dein lieben sun*

*An deiner Schwester und auch mir,
Das uns nit werd der Leichnam gnommen
(von den Juden nämlich)
Lass in zu der Erden kommen!*

*und lass von deinem Klagen nun!
Lass mich in legen in das Grab
diweil ich die Vergunst noch hab.*

Does not the whole tenderness and sweetness of German sentiment speak to us in this scene?

That is the deep trusting love of the people for their dear Saviour and his dear Mother, such as we find in the Middle-Ages in thousands of instances. The same love which causes the giant Christopher to bow his back under the burden of the holy Child, the same love which inspires the barbaric knight to holy deeds for «our dear Lady and her sweet Child». We find the same traits of loving sympathy, of infinite tenderness again in the old popular «Mangers» and Christmas Plays, in the figures of the three shepherds, who are poor, awkward peasants and who yet, when they hear of the birth of the holy Babe, consult thoughtfully together as to what would be suitable for the newly-born One. The first is going to bring Him a «Pfandl» of porridge, another a honeycomb, the third a lamb, He can keep warm in the skin he says; then again they propose to present Him with a fowl, the mother can make a «strong broth» from it and fill His cot with its feathers; and in this care for helpless naked poverty lies the whole over-flowing measure of affection of a still rough, but good-natured and sincere people. As in the springtime the gum oozes from all the buds and cracks of the trees, so oozes as it were from every pore of this young, vigorous, lusty folk the over-welling hearts-blood of deep feeling in art and poesy, in zeal for compassionate love, which fairly revels in relieving the poor, the weary and heavy laden.

Just in this Text of St. Ulrich and Afra do we find such wonderful, deep, human traits.

Thus the tie between Mother and Son is an uncommonly intimate, entirely human one. Never in her sorrow does she make mention of His divine origin. Just as a child has no appreciation for rank or good-breeding, so a people in its childhood does not yet find an expression for the divine sublimity of the Redeemer. Therefore to the Mother, Christ it not the God, — whom she had had for only a short space, to return Him again to His heavenly Father — not God incarnate, whose Being was far beyond her power of understanding, He is her Child, her dear, beloved Child, whom she had given birth to, and carried in her arms: flesh of her flesh, and blood of her blood, and if Mary Magdalene the sinner, once used the expression «the pure immaculate body» (*der rein und unuermalget Leib*), the theological truisms, with which the Godhead of Christ is designated, are never applied to Him.

The last lament of the Mother when they carry Him to the grave, was for the Child, the beloved Child:

*O we, sprich ich und immer we!
wie sol mir nun beschehen me?
Ach golt ir frawen allgemain
baide mitleiden keusch und rein
Nun helfend clagen mir mein Kind!*

*ir wissend wol, wie lieb sy sind.
(Die Kinder nämlich.)
Ich han mein liebes kind verloren
kein liebers kind ward nie geboren.
O we! wa soll ich mein trost vinden
mein Hünd möcht ich vor iamer vinden.*

In this complete humanisation of the sacred subject lies that which brings it home to us so vividly, and moves us so strangely.

Theology altogether does not seem to be the strong point of the author. He decidedly does not know much more of the Gospel than what he has acquired from hearsay, and, instead of it, partly uses phrases from the church service.

Thus for instance the washing of the disciples' feet comes *after* the Last Supper, which is held in the most simple and informal manner. Also the religious reflections of the Proclaimer, who represents the part of the Prologue, are quite in keeping with the general primitiveness, and without any theological admixture. He begs the audience in moving words, to take all that Jesus Christ suffered, rightly to heart, so that they may one day obtain the everlasting crown in Heaven. That is about the pith of every reflection. Strange too is the Resurrection.

The Jews come to the grave of Christ, where they hear the watch singing, and say:

*Wir wollen zu dem Grabe gan
ihesus der will auferstan*

*Und ist es war und ist es war,
so werden guldin unser Haar.*

They enjoin further watchfulness on the part of the guards, so that the disciples may not steal the body of Christ. The soldiers promise with boastful words, the Jews depart, and the guards fall asleep.

*Dann so kumpt der Engel vnd singt
Exurge, vnd spricht darauf also:
Stand auf Herr ihesu! es ist Zeit;*

*wann die well als iämmerlichen leit;
Vnd zerstör der tewfel gewalt
u. s. w.*

*Yetz stat der Her auf und singt Resurexi und spricht darauf
Saluator*

*Ich hab geschlaffen nach der Mentschhait;
doch wachet an mir die gothait,
die an mir nie war gespart*

*noch von mir ye geschaiden wart.
Nun will ich hie nit lenger sein
sonder gan zu der Hölle Pein.*

Now the first soldier gets up, and awakes his comrades, with the bitter reproach, that they have allowed themselves to fall asleep, and that He has gone. — Thereupon the Proclaimer appears, informs the audience that the Play is at an end, and admonishes them once again:

*got uns sein hailgen Segen send
das uns sein bitterlicher Schmerz
nymmer komm auss unserm Hertz!
— — — — —
das uns darumb werde schon*

*das fron Himmelreich zu lon!
Sprechend: Amen wir gaud dahin
das ewig Reich sei unser gwin
Vnd singend auch alle samblen
gar fröhlich „Christ ist erstanden!“*

— *Finis.* —

But now comes an after-play, which shows Christ at the gates of hell, with the fore-fathers, who have long been awaiting him, and whom he takes up with him to heaven.

We have here simply the celebration of the Ascension, as it is still held in our churches on Easter Even, with the Latin chants between the orations. Thus for instance the angel sings three times: «*Surrexit dominus sepulchro*» and the Patriarchs answer «*Qui pro nobis pependit in ligno etc.*» Then comes the Ascension scene proper, we hear the Mother Mary lamenting in her house for her lost Son, who has promised her to rise again from the dead in three days, and of whom she has as yet heard nothing. Christ sends the angel Gabriel to her to tell her that He has risen, and Gabriel sings in Mary's house with the other angels the song: «*Regina celi lactare etc.*» and then proclaims to her the Resurrection of Christ. Now the Saviour Himself appears, «*unfacht sy und singt*»:

«*Salve sancta parens etc.*» Then He salutes the Mother, hails her blessed, in that she has given Him life, and has contributed to the redemption of mankind, He names her Queen of Heaven and Intercessor for mankind, and

*Damit so schaid ich getz von dir;
ewigen Trost soll han von mir.*

Maria zu ihesu

*Wer dich hat, allerliebster sun
was mag denn der begehren nun?*

*Du bist die höchst weissheit und wunn
und aller sild (Glückes) und gnaden brunn.*

u. s. w.

Then Christ disappears with the Patriarchs, bidding them wait for Him in Paradise. And not till now do the three Marys appear, to look after the grave, fearing that they will not be able to raise the stone; they find the stone already pushed aside and the grave empty, and two angels announce to them the miracle of the Resurrection, which ends the Play.

In this Play there are three things which particularly strike us: firstly, the complete want of a theologically trained way of thinking, secondly, the high poetic beauty, the deep, purely human sentiment of the first part of the work, and thirdly the ritual character of the Mystery itself. There where the bard has to portray humanity, he is real, and strikes a touching chord, but there where he ventures into the regions of the Divine, his skill ceases, and the utmost means of expression he has, are the chants and customs of his church, in which the Godhead is daily revealed to him.

Certain quite old german expressions in the spoken part between the Latin chants are wonderfully interesting, and in my opinion lead us to believe that the age of the work dates back earlier than the 15th century. The word *sild* for *Glück*, then the exclamation:

«*Eya, raine, geerte Fraw*», the expression «*cläglich*», and the spelling of several words remind us of the language of *Walther von der Vogelweide*. How does the Passion Text of 1662 compare with this Middle-Age Play? Trautmann treats it most contemptuously, and maintains that it has absolutely no claim to dramatic worth; W. Wyl calls it a clownish comedy. I have therefore endeavoured to verify the saying: «*entrollst du gar ein würdig Pergament, so steigt der ganze*

Himmel zu mir nieder», (if you unravel an old manuscript it opens up a new world to you) and with great trouble and patience have read through the sight-ruining manuscript.

I found in it so many beauties, so many a highly dramatic scene, I found, beside real plebeian trivialities, here and there so much deep sentiment and such an earnest effort to do justice to the spiritual significance of Jesus Christ, that I was really surprised.

The theological element is already much more in evidence, we see that the writer has had recourse to the words of the Gospel, an angel depicts the suffering of Christ, and makes reflections reminding us of Thomas à Kempis. Here it is no longer the mere expression of direct sentiments which impresses the soul, the writer has well considered the matter, has gone to the bottom of sentiment as it were, he tries to analyse it with philosophic thinking. Interspersed, we again find genuine and characteristic traits of touching naiveté, along with great coarseness, and blatant banalities. When we consider however that we always have to reckon with the clumsiness and poverty of expression of the language, which the audiences of those times were accustomed to, when we take the looseness of morals, the formality in all things, we must confess that it is really a work worthy of notice, a work which treats the sacred subject in a worthy manner. I should like to point out that between this Text and that of St. Ulrich and Afra a similar difference exists as for instance between the works of a van Eyck and those of the later school of the 16th century. We find, as with the latter, a strong tendency to individualize, with all the stiffness and in part incorrectness of drawing, a realism, which borders on ugliness, and I would almost say a commencement of a craze for folds and accessories, which impair the purity of conception.

The Play is for the greater part, although with slight alterations, identical with that of St. Ulrich and Afra, whilst Wild's Text in its first part presents great variations, but in the second half is again interwoven with the Ammergau Text. The Play begins with the modified Prologue from Wild's Text:

*Heil und Gnad vor Gott allein
Sei allen, die da heut versammelt sein
u. s. w.*



Prologue (Epilogus) in the 17th century.

The Prologue now announces, that they are going (*«eine Tragedie vor Augen stöllen, deren Grund und Fundament,*

Ist und zeigt das neue Testament u. s. w.» (to present a tragedy whose plot and foundation, is and is shown by the New Testament etc.)

The Prologue exhorts the spectators to lay the matter well to heart *«denn die Tragedie ist kein Scherz»* (for the tragedy is no jest), and to view the sufferings of Christ with due reverence.

This prologue, although it is partly based on Wild's text, seems to me, in language and substance to be the newest part of the whole, at any rate it was revised in 1662.

Now comes a scene, which is neither in the Text of St. Ulrich and Afra, nor in Wild's, so far as the latter is contained in Hartmann's work.

Satan appears and reads out a letter from Lucifer, in which he, in opposition to the words of the Prologue, calls upon the audience to pay no attention to the holy Play, but to desecrate it with laughter and mockery, so that they may all come to him in hell.

And now the Play proper commences, and that exactly according to the Text of St. Ulrich and Afra. Christ with His disciples is in Bethany, and is saying how the time will soon come when He must depart from this world, and through His death redeem the world. He then goes with the disciples into the house of Simon the leper, Mary Magdalene comes, anoints his feet, and Judas shows himself indignant over the waste.

Jesus reproves him with the words:

*Judas und lieben Jünger mein
Ir soll dess nil rindultig sein
Sye hatt ein guets werkh damit thon,
Dann sye ist zuvor khommen schon,
Meinen Leichnamb zu Salben hie
Zue meiner begräbnuss mit wiehe
Ir habt alzeit bey Euch die armen*

*Vnd khundt Euch über Sy erbarmen
So Ir In Je wöll quales beweisen
Dessen Ir Euch alzeit soll besteissen,
Mich aber miest ir balt verlassen,
Derhalben last Sy auch dermassen
Zufrülen, wass Sy jetzt khundt hatt
Hat sie bewisen mit der Tadt.*

Jesus then reproaches Martha, who finds fault with her sister, meaning here Mary Magdalene, because she does not help her at all in serving.

*Martha, Martha! sorgfällig bist
vnd vil betrübl zu diser frist*

*Maria hat ir ausserwöll
ain tail der nymmer von ir fölt.*



Satan reads out Lucifer's letter.
(In the Plays before 1750)

Jesus now sends forth two disciples to Jerusalem to find a house where they may eat the Passover, and after their departure He takes leave of the women, and foretells His death; and now comes a very touching and human scene, which I introduce because it is still retained in an altered and clearer form in the Text of to-day, viz: the parting from Mary. Christ bids the disciples draw a little aside, so that He can converse with His Mother.

Christus geht mit den Zechen Jüngern, auch Maria und die andern Frauen all ein.

Christus :

Mein Zeit ist nunmehr izt an dem,
Dass ich gehe nach Jerusalem,
Und dasebst Ess dass Osterlamb
Mit euch meine Jünger allesamb,
So geht ihr hie ein wenig fort,
ich hab zu reden noch ein Wort
Mit meiner lieben Mutter da,
ehe ich schaid von Bethania,
Nun allerliebste Mutter mein
Weils khan und mag nit anderst sein,
Dass ich mich muess schaiden von dir
so will es jetzt gebüren mir
Ehe dass ich hingeh in den Todt,
Und leide sovil Hohn und Spott,
Muess ich mein Khindliches Herz vor dir
Zur lez aufschliessen glaub: mir
einmal ist meines Vatters Will
Dass ich seinen gfasslen Zohren still,
Ehe ich ihm aber thue nachkhemmen,
will ich von dir Vrlaub nemmen,
Wollan schmerzhafter Mutter mein,
Gesegn dich Gott der Vatter mein,
Ich dankh dir Mütterliches Herz,
dass du mich tragen ohne schmerz,
mein ganzer Monat in deinem leib,
ach Mutter, vielbetrubtes weib,
mit sorg hast mich auferzogen
da ich hab deine brust gesoyen
ich dankhe dir Vmb alle sorg und last
so du meinthalbe getragen hast,
gehab dich woll. ich bit dich drum
ich schaid von dir, kher wiederumb,
lass dir nit fallen gar zu schwer,
ich bit, betrieb dich nit so sehr
Dann alles wass ich jeltzund leid
wird dir und eillen bringen freid.

Maria :

du vielgeliebter Jesu mein,
wie khundt es doch nur möglich sein,
dass mein herz nit soll sein betrieht
dan ich dich alzeit herzlich gliebt,
jetzt muess ich hören ach der noth,
dass du wilt gehen in bitterm Todt,
o schwere sach, o harte tadt,

dass mir billig durchs herz ausgalt,
wass dankhest mir aber lieber Sohn,
dann alles wass ich dir gelhan,
hab ich ein Magd, deiner Gottheit nach,
gedienet in freid und Vngemach
Vnd nach der menscheit habe ich
mich erzeugt wie ein Muetter sich,
darumb darfst du nit dankhen vill
Vmb eins mein Sohn ich bitten will
versag mir's nit, lass mich mit dir,
wie dir geschech, so geschech auch mir.

Christus :

hent khans nit sein, du bleibe da
gehe wider nach Bethania,
mit meiner bausn Martha framb
bis dass ich wider zu dir khomb

Maria :

mein Sohn Jesu ist's dann dein will
dass ich soll alda halten still,
Vnd Dich von dannen scheiden sechen,
muss ich ach wehe, woll lassen geschehen

sinkt zurück, Magdalena umbfahet sie und Martha.

wie schwerlich aber mir es fall
ach wehe, ach Gott in's Himmel Sal
herzallerliebster Sohne mein
lass mich dir noch benolchen sein
Mein Sohn, zulest noch ains ich bit,
du wöllest mirs abschlagen nit,
ein ander Todt thu dir erwöhlen,
dann an dem Creuz die bösen Gsölln,
ihr Leben enden mit dem Todt,
den sie verschuld durchraubund mordt.

Christus :

herzallerliebste muetter mein
es khan ainmal nit anderst sein
meines himmlischen Vatters willen,
muess ich jeltzund nun erfüllen,
am Creüz erlösen die Menschen all,
die gefallen sein durchs Adams Fhail
in schwere sind und Misselhat,
diese dein bit hat ir nit stat.

Maria:

mein kindl von dir noch ains beger
ich bit du mich diesmal erhör
wann ie muest leiden so grosse noth,
lass mich doch sterben vor dein Todt,
Damit ich mit den Augen mein,
nit darf unsehen die martler dein.

Christus:

ach Mutter mein verzeih mir diss,
es khan nit sein zu dieser frist
dann du die Jünger nach mein Todt
würst trösten müssen in ihr not,
sonst würde mein lehr auch ganz
und gar
auf Erdt erlöschē, sag ich firwar.

Maria:

Noch ains ich bit mit grosser Clag,
auf wenigst mir dies nit versag,
lass mich mit dir leiden und sterben
den sinderu auch das heil erwerben,
ohn dich o Jesu libster schatz,
mein leben auf Erdt hat khein plaz
ach Jesu ich bit dich mit schmerz
sich an deiner Mutter trauriges Herz.

Christus:

dass ist zwar ein so starkhe bit,
die ich dir khan zuesagen nit,
anderst khans nit sein noch werden
du muesst noch lenger sein auf Erdten
der Todt der würdt ganz bitterlich
von einander schaiden mich und dich.

Judas Iskariot:

Maister gehe fohrt, dann es ist zeit
der Abent ist nun nimmer weil,
das osterlaub bereit würdt sein
spat kommen wir dazue hinein.

Christus:

ich bit dich libste Mutter mein
gib herzlich deinen willen darein
und kher umb dann es ist zeit spat
ich muss heut noch hinein in dstadt
vorhanden ist mein Zeil und stund
auf die ich wart von herzengrund,

Maria fällt Jesu zu Füssen:

muess ich dann dich o siesse freid
lassen von mir, ach herzenleid
wie scharf ist mir mein Herz verwundt
ach dass ich mit dir sterben khundt

lass mich mit dir o libes Kindt
ohn dich khein Trost noch freid ich findt.
bleibst du bei mir und ich bei dir
stirb ich mit dir, stirbst du mit mir.

Christus hebt sie auf:

stehe auf mein Mutter, diese bit
khann ich dir je gestatten nit,
das du mit mir in Todt sollst gehen.
thuet nit in meinem willen stehen,
darumb herzlichste Mutter mein
ergib dich es muss doch sein.

Judas Iskariot:

was ihr thuen wölht das thuet doch bald
wir khommen sonst dieser Gestalt
nit mehr hinein bei zeit in dstatt,
ist doch schon da die finstre Nacht

Martha:

ach libster Maister bleib heut hie;
khanst morgen woll ohn alle miehe
in dstatt hinauf, kher wider umb
mein liben Herr ich bit dich drum

Judas Iskariot:

Wir wölle noch frie guneg naus-
khemmen,
wann sie nur einmal Vrlaub nemmen
es geht heut also langsam zue
mein Herz hat weder Rast noch rue.

Magdalena:

o herzlichster Maister mein
weil ie die libste Mutter dein
bei dir so gar nicht khan erwerben
dass du wilt an dem Creüz sterben
so bit ich dich von Herzengrund
als lib ich dich ie haben khundt
ergib dich nit in solche miehe
und bleib doch diese Ostern hie
und thue dein Mutter nit also gar
verlassen

Christus:

Maria thu dich des biten massen,
ja meine freind und bausen lib,
ich weiss woll dass ich euch betrieb
durch mein abschied und schwere raiss,
die mir austreiben wird den schwaiss,
weils aber nit khan anders sein
beuñch ich euch die Mutter mein
tröstet sie sonit ihr immer möcht
bis ich erlöss das menschlich schlecht.

Maria:

muess es denn leider gschaiden sein
so gehe hin liben Jesu mein

*Erlöss das menschliche Geschlecht
ist es dir so sei es mir auch recht
durch welchen du gesegnet mich
durch diesen gesegne ich auch dich*

Christus:

*gehe hin in frieden, sei getröst
wann ich nun hab die welt erlöst
wird all euer schmerzen und traurigkeit
verwandt werden in grosse freud,*

umfahet Maria und macht ein †

*hiemit so gib ich dir den segnen
mein himmlischer Vatter wöll dein pflegen.*

*Maria Magdalena liebe freindin mein
lass dir mein Muetter bevolchen sein.*

Magdalena:

*ja herztibster Maister und Herr
ich wills tun nach dein begehrt
du wöllest uns beistehn altzeit
der Engel Gottes dich begleid*

*(Maria und die Frauen gehen
ab und Christus get gegen
den Ort, wo man das Oster-
lamm isset.)*

In spite of many a touching passage we do not see any more the ingenuous ideas, no longer the all-forgetting tenderness of the Mother, as in the Text of St. Ulrich and Afra. Here Mary is already conscious of the divinity of the Lord, and in spite of all love an almost *official* tone seems to run through the distinction made between the Deity and humanity, which certainly must be of later origin, as it is neither in the Text of St. Ulrich and Afra, nor in Wild's.

The two disciples, John and Peter, whom Christ has sent forth, to prepare the Last Supper, have in the meantime found the goodman of the house, and executed His commands. When all is made ready, Christ appears, whom the host warmly welcomes, and they sit round the table. When all are seated, Jesus says the Lord's Prayer, which the disciples repeat.

Sobald man sich zum Abendmahl gerichtet hat, spricht Christus vor dem Tisch.

Christus:

*Ehe dass wir essen ist kommetten
dass wir das Vatter unser betten,
Vatter unser allen zugleich,
der du bist in dem Himmelreich
dein namen herr geheiligt werd
wie im Himmel also auch auf Erdt
zukomm b uns dein Reich, dein willen,
lass uns durch dein Guad erfüllen,
gib uns heut unser täglich brot*

*wass uns zu leib und seel ist noth,
und vergib uns unsre schuld
wie wir vergeben mit gedult
all unsern schuldigern auf Erden
lass uns o Herr auch nit werden
geführt in kein Versuchung nicht.
wann uns der böse feind anfiht
erlöss uns Herr uns aller yfar
Amen amen dass werde wahr.*

Christ now bids the host bring Him a basin of water, and the scene of the washing of the feet follows, then the institution of the Holy Communion, which, in exact accordance with the Gospel, in its simple character, has even in doggerel verse an impressive effect. Then Christ comes to speak of His betrayal by Judas, likewise exactly according to the Gospel, and now follows a quaint scene:

Judas Iskariot:

*Sag an Maister meinst Du mich,
soll ich nun verratten dich.*

Christus:

*ich sage dir zu dieser frist
du hast es gesagt als es ist.*

Johannes:

Herr lass mich den Verrätter wissen.

Christus:

dem ich jetzt geben werd den Bissen.

(Christus nimmt ein pissen brott vnd gibt ihn den Judas und spricht):

*nimb hin Judas von mir dass brott
vnd gehe balt hin vnd thue die latt*

*wass du in deinem herzen hast
denn du hast weder Ruhe noch Rast.*

Judas nimmt das brott indem khombt ein Engel und nimmt ihm den schain
ab vnd Judas steht zornig auf vom tisch lasst den stuel fhallen vnd lauft davon,
auch get ihm ein Teifel nach vnd Simon spricht zum Judas:

Symon:

*Judas wo will du jetzt hinlaufen
ich main du wöll etwas einklauffen,
dass du so eilends lauffst davon
vnd hast den stuel dort liegen lon.*



Judas leaves the Last-Supper (1662). (An angel takes away his halo).

I believe that the word «*einkaufen*» has here a sarcastic signification, as we might now-a-days say, «you run as if you had stolen something». Curiously enough however this very question of Peter's is contained word for word in our present Text, another proof, how much of the Play of the Middle-Ages has been retained.

Christus spricht am tisch:

*Wisset Ir was ich hab gethan
dieses sollt Ir Euch nemmen an,
Maister vnd Herr Ihr zu mir sprecht
daran tuet ihr gar woll vnd recht
weil ich Euer Herr vnd Maister da
Euch Euer fuess hab gwaschen also
darumb so hab ich dass gethan
dass ihr dabei sollet verstahn
dass mich die lib darzu hat bracht.
darumb kheiner den andern veracht,
und liebet einander allezeit
so erkennt man dass ihr meine Jünger
seid*

*jetzt ist des Menschen Sohn verkhkert
und auch der Vatter durch ihn auf Erdt
auch würd ihn Gott selbstgleich
verkhleren und ich würd bei Euch
nit lang mer seind, darumb so
behaltet für mein lieblichkeit da,*

(soll wohl heissen „lieblichkeit“)

*mein Wort, darin ihr mich allzeit
bei Euch habet in der warheit,
sonst würd euch, gsehnen wie Ich
zu den Juden sayet ihr werdet mich
Suchen aber wo ich bin möget ihr
nit hinkommen das glaubet mir,*

Now come the protestations of Peter and the assurances of Christ that he will deny his Master three times. Then a prayer of thanksgiving is offered up:

<i>Danket dem Herrn sein grosse Güelte lobet Gott von Herzen und Gemiette der allem Fleisch auf Erdt speis' thuet geben</i>	<i>Vnd verhalt die Welt völli darneben der uns alles guets, hier vnd dort bereit dem sei lob und dankh in Ewigkeit,</i>
--	--

Christ takes leave of the host, who will not let him depart, and goes with his disciples, whom he advises to buy some swords:

*hinauss in ein Gartten
da wür den Feind wölten erwarten.*

Now follows the scene, where Judas sells Christ in the council-hall, and the following original passage comes in here, the Rabbi saying:

*Wir haben 30 Pfenning in unser gratt,
die seindt von Silber guet und alt,
die haben wir lange Zeit gespart,
darumb Joseph verkhaufft wardt.*

Here the symbolic treatment is to be seen. The thirty pieces of silver, which have already served for a betrayal, are here again used for the same purpose. Peculiar too is the manner in which Judas recounts the Last Supper to Caiphas, whereby the difference between Judas and the other disciples is already strongly marked in his utter lack of intelligence:

Judas:

*. . . Er fing gleich an vor uns allen
Wie wür dass Ostertamb assen eben
thatt vnss vil neuer sazung geben.*

Kaiphas:

Wass für sazung müg dass sein,

Judas:

*Es ist mir nit fasst gangen ein
Er macht vil worte wascht uns die Fiesse
dass thatt mich gleich zu letzt verdriessen
Ich machet mich gleich auf vnd davon.*

The pieces of silver are now paid out to Judas, and with every count a verse is spoken.

Three devils appear who rejoice over the deed, and then comes the Prologue reviewing the treachery of Judas, which has given Jesus to the „shambles“.

Then follows a scene, which is taken word for word from the Text of St. Ulrich and Afra, and which I give here, because it is so completely an element of old folk-poesy: Mary recommends her Son to Judas' keeping. Judas goes, after having committed the crime, to the holy women in Bethany, where the anxious Mother speaks the following to him:

Maria:

*bist Gott will klumb über freunde mein
ich Erman dich auf die trene dein
wass zu Jerusalem sind die mär
von den juden und gleissner
hörst du nichts böss von meinem kind
das sag du mir mit Worten geschwind
mein herz ist mir überauss schwer.*

Judas spricht sanftmichtig:

*Maria ich sag dir gute mär
darumb vernimb mich offenbar,
wass ich dir sag und das ist wahr
dass ich nichts arges hab vernommen
dass deinem Sohn mecht zu schad khomen
es stat ganz wolt umb deinen Sohn.*

Maria :

*mein lieber Judas merkh mich nun
ich vertrau dir ob den andern allen
ich hoff du thüest nach meinem gefallen
darumb du lbster Jünger mein
lass dir mein Sohn bevolchen sein.
und hab In stat in deiner huetl
denn du weisst woll der Juden gnieth
dass sy ihm tragen neid und hass
darumb so fleiss dich desler bass
wann du hörst ein besen anschlag
es sey bei nacht oder beim tag
so bring In bald daher zu mir
denn alles gueses vertrau ich dir
sich vleissig auf In allezeit.*

Judas redt demietig :

*ach frau glaub mir in dvarheit
du darfst mich umb dass gar nit billen
Nun waistu woll mein Sütten*

*dass nur mein Maister Jesumt Chris
allwegen woll bevolchen ist
ich will gar Vleissig auf ihn schaun.*

Maria Magdalena :

*so thuen wir dir vertrauen
und thue dein treue an ihm nit sparn
lass den Maister nit verfuhrn
wann sich dJuden zusammen gsöllu
da sy den Herren fachen wöllu
und gber ihm thellen schlagen rat
so führ den Maister auss der stall
und lass ihn ninderst in khain gfahr.*

Judas :

*ihr frauen sind ohn sorgen gar
dem Maister wird khain leid geschehen
ich will gern rnd vill aufsehen
auf das best so ich immer khan
wie ich dann allzeit hab gethan.*

(geht ab.)

Who is not here involuntarily reminded of the scene, where Chriemhild gives her Siegfried into the charge of the grim Hagen? This terribly tragic *motif*, that the beloved one is handed over with thoughtful care to the protection of the traitor, runs so frequently through our folk-poesy. We find it continually recurring in old legends and fairy-tales, in pagan as well as christian, that it has even crept into the holy Scriptures, in order to magnify the tragedy of the story. I maintain, that the tragic element, since perhaps past ages, was in the German character, that their simple confidence has been deceived and misused in a base manner by foreign elements, and that the frequent recurrence of this painful experience has formed a bitter ingredient in the people's nature. Anyhow this little episode is again a proof how truly the Passion Play was an outcome of the real character of the people.

Now comes the scene on the Mount of Olives. We see Jesus suffering, the sleeping disciples, His despair, we see Him fall to the ground, and whilst lying with His face to the ground, the angel comes to the front of the stage with the Soul, and shows it the sufferings and agonies of Christ. After this an angel appears who comforts Jesus, and then comes the arrest as it is still represented. — I do not wish to weary the reader by enumerating the endless trials, the whole painfully dragging course of the proceedings. A perfect crowd of people comes on the stage, the holy women lamenting, the knights and soldiers of Pilate, and the chief Council in all their Middle-Age coarseness, the scribes and lawyers, in short the whole troupe which figures in the pictorial representations of the Passion in the 16th century. It is strange how certain features have been preserved in the Play of the present day, so for instance the fact, that the chief agitators against Christ are the traders and money-changers of the temple whose interests have been damaged. Prof. Sepp in his account of the year 1850 finds fault with this *motif* of the conspiracy against Christ, in my opinion wrongly, for the worst and most irreconcilable enemy of the ideal is and remains at all times the nature which has been offended in its lowest instincts, especially where its purse is concerned.

Father Ottmar Weiss has therefore quite rightly included this feature of low love of revenge in his new edition. Another feature which has survived is the characteristic qualities of Pilate, who then as now was depicted with a certain predilection. He has, as the only respectable and educated man in contrast with this vulgar, fanatic band of Jews, become a typical figure, which in its conception has remained unchanged up to the present day. At the Crucifixion, which takes place with all the roughness of that period, the two thieves are taken down before Christ. As soon as they are laid on the ground, an angel seizes one to take him to Paradise, a devil the other to take him to Hell. Judas too, who has hanged himself, and that in the presence of the High Council, is dragged by three devils into Hell. At this part it was formerly customary to tear out the intestines from Judas' body and for the devils to devour them. They consisted however of fried batter, which the youthful devils enjoyed immensely. In the beginning of last century this custom was still kept up. The Descent from the Cross takes place as now with infinite love and tenderness. Christ is laid in His Mother's lap. Unfortunately the beautiful poetic passage in the Text of St. Ulrich and Afra which I have previously quoted, is replaced by a long discourse of the Mother Mary over the body of Christ, in the style usually adopted in the convents, which indeed is very pathetic and beautiful, but does not contain by far the deep direct sentiment of the older Text.

Poetically it is not without a certain beauty of form, in the style of the old church canticles, of which it reminds us. For instance:

*O allerhöchste Zier und Glanz
der väterlichen Glori ganz
Wie halt dein schön sich heut verkhert
Und mir meinen grossen Schmerze mehrt.
O allerhöchste Weisheit gross
Vnaussprechlich ohn' Vudterlass
Wie betriebl thust du da liegen
dein heiliger Mund ist ganz verschweigen
u. s. w.*

Then follows the scene of the Burial, already described in the Text of St. Ulrich and Afra, except that the speeches of the sorrowing women and men are still longer and more tedious. We pass over endless wearying colloquies of the Jews and the guards, then the awakening of Christ and His descent into Hell, where he promises to show the redeemed the way to Paradise. This scene differs from the above mentioned one in the Text of St. Ulrich and Afra in that it has not the character of divine service, is shorter, and consequent. It is also not sung, but is spoken in the same rhythm as the preceding verses, like any ordinary event.

Then follow long conversations of the awakened guards. At last Mary comes to the grave, learns from the angel that Christ has risen, and immediately afterwards Christ himself appears. Now follow the scenes where Christ appears firstly to the women, then later to the disciples, then the disputes of the high priests and guards, the appearance of Christ to the disciples at Emmaus, and finally the conversion of the unbelieving Thomas, which is taken direct from the Passion

Play of Sebastian Wild. I quote this last scene because I consider it to be dramatically one of the most valuable, and also because an expert literary scholar of our time, without knowing the old Text, already in the 'eighties conceived the idea of inserting this dramatically effective scene in place of the insipid Ascension-apotheosis. To my way of thinking it is a great pity that this idea was never realised, which would only have agreed with the original Text.

Christ has just been with the disciples, and has then departed.

(Christus verschwindet oder geht ab; nachdem geht Thomas zu den jüngern und spricht zu Ihm.)

Bartholomäuss:

*Thoma werstu gewesen in der nechen
so hestu auch den Herrn gesechen
Er ist Erst bei Vns gewesen eben.*

Thomass:

ich khan euch kheinen glauben geben.

Bartholomäuss:

Er ist da gewesen glaub mir darumben.

Thomass:

*Wo wollt er sobald hin sein kommen
Er ist gleich bei Euch gewesen wie
gestern bei den drei frauen die
auch sagten sie hätten ihn gesechen
und sei verschwunden in der gechen
wie möchte aber dass mir sein
gleich als wär er ein geist unrein
dass er also sollt hin und wider
verschwinden thuen auf und nider
fahrend wie ein gespenst unwürdig
ich bin sein gar nimmer grüßlich
thue euch auch kheinen glauben geben
dass er wider mög sein bei leben
man hat ihn anderst wohin tragen.*

Judas Thaddäus:

*mainst wir wollten dir davon sagen
wann wir In nit erkannten recht.*

Thomass:

*wie wollt solches sein, wie mecht
er sich sobald haben verschloffen
ich bin sein kheineswegs mehr verhoffen.*

Judas Thaddäus:

willt uns denn also widerstreben.

Thomass:

*Es ist sonst ainer gewesen der Im eben
gleich wird sechen in allen sachen.*

Petruss:

*willt uns denn allsam blind machen
so wir ihn doch gesechen haben
und ihm ein stück von einem prattfisch
gaben*

*ist eigentlich bei vns gewesen
hätt auch mit vns trankhen und gessen
willt vns denn allsamb betauben.*

Thomass:

*sagt was ihr wöllt ich khan's nit glauben
biss dass ich die Neglmallen sich
an hand und fuessen eigentlich
welche ihm die Mörder haben
am Creuz mit negeln durchgraben,
und lege in die wunden sein
mein hand und seiner seiten all ein
sonst khan ich kheinen glauben gebe.*

(Christus get zu den jüngern ein.)

Jakob der klein:

*sich Thoma wer ist dieser eben
den sollt du schauen eben an
weil dich niemand gberreden khan.*

Christus:

*der fried sei mit Euch jetzund
und fürchet euch nit zu dieser stund
Thoma weil du ungläubig bist
so komb jetzund zu dieser frist
leg her deine hand in die
wunden meiner seiten hie
besich die händ und fusse mein
dadurch die mögel gangen sein
du thuest doch sonst khein glauben geben*

Thomass:

*nun sich ich dich jetzund eben
und hab auch kheinen zweifel mer
o du mein Gott und du mein Herr
und glaub ich jetzt zu dieser frist
und weiss gewiss dass du es bist*

der an dem Cruz ist worden getödt
wie wol ich einen zweifel hält
man soll mich weiter nichts beschweren
Gott sei globt dass ich meinen Herrn
jetzt lebendig siech offenbar.

Christus :

Thoma ich sage dir fürwahr
jetzunder glaubest du an mich
so du mich siehest so eigentlich
vnd hast mich griffen mit deiner
hand
so hast du mich ganz wol erkant
aber diesen menschen lob ich hoch
der mich nit sieht vnd glaubet doch.

Christus bläst sie an und spricht weiter:

und nembet hin den heiligen Geist
welchen ihr hie die Sünden verzeiht
dem sollen sie dort verziehen sein
durch den himlischen Vatter mein
und was ihr werd binden hierundten
soll auch im himel sein gebunden.
und wilß ich euch alsam aussenden
in die ganze Welt an all enden
und allen Creaturen schon

predigt das heilig Evangelium.
get auch hin in dem namen mein
tauffet alle völkher in gemain
in dem namen Gott des Vatters
vnd des Sohnes vnd heiligen Geistes amen.

*Christus verschwind und die
Jünger gehen ab, dann Epi-
logus geht ein und spricht.*

Epilogus :

aus dieser geschicht und tragedi
haben wir fünf stuckh zu merken hie
erstlich betrachtel Golles zorn
darin Er hatt so hoch verschvorn
dass khain mensch immer und ewig gleich
mer ein soll gehn in das Himelreich
ess war der mensch wiz fromb er wöll,
so muessl sein seel in die vorhöll
alss und das wehret ein lange zeit,
und souiel guet herziger leith
dahin muessen nach ihrem sterben,
khain mensch khundt doch mer guat
erwerben.

I find this epilogue simply charming, the naive conception of God's anger expressed therein, the unconscious sympathy for the «good-hearted people» who so innocently come down to Hell, is really delightful, and certainly the theology contained therein has not exactly originated from the wisdom of great divines. It is much more likely that it has grown in the humble garden of the worthy school-master and master-singer Sebastian Wild in Augsburg. Moreover the Epilogue continues for three pages with a moral application of the Sufferings of Christ, and finally apologizes to the audience:

Wan ein Person hätt gefehlt zugegen
 Man woll' es uns nit zu Spott auslegen
 Sondern gedenken, dass wir derzeit
 Sind nur grobe Bauersleut

 $u, s, w,$

This Passion Text, which I have endeavoured to render here in as short a form as possible, was with few alterations, in use until 1740. About this time it was re-written in the style of the then prevailing Jesuitic Plays by Father Rosner, then living in Ettal. We cannot say however that Rosner's text was a new creation of Jesuitic art, for Dr. Hartmann points out that Rosner has for the greater part transposed the old text with great skill into harmonious Alexandrine verse. A great profusion of allegorical figures, death, sin, avarice, envy have all to appear, *tableaux vivants* from the Old Testament follow every act, the chief characteristic of Jesuitic Plays, two acts which go on simultaneously, of which the one is to a certain extent symbolical of the other. The course of the Play proceeds according to the old Testament and closes with a magnificent apotheosis as *finale*.

Here too, for the first time, music plays a more important part. The Chorus is formed of a Prologue and six guardian spirits, and airs are sung; in short, the whole thing is arranged after the pattern of the Italian opera. This adaptation was twice performed, in the years 1750 and 1760; in 1770 the Play was not given, and now we see a remarkable thing, we see how the spirit of the people frees itself from the foreign influences forced upon it, and how now the new Text, adapted to the requirements of a new time — of a new generation, develops in purified beauty out of the simplicity of the Middle-Ages, out of the bombast and showiness of the Jesuitic plays.

Already in 1780 the Oberammergauers had begged Father Magnus Knipfelberger, living in Ettal, to simplify the Text of Father Rosner. I have already stated in a previous paragraph, that an uncommonly fine artistic feeling, an innate perception of good taste characterises the Ammergauer and this sentiment was in earlier times, when artistic tendencies had not made themselves so much felt, and Middle-Age training was still in evidence, most likely even stronger than now.

We can easily imagine that the style of Rosner's work with its extravagances, with its bombast so utterly unsuitable for a village-stage, could not in the long run possibly coincide with the plain temperament of the village inhabitants. The Text of the year 1880 is considerably simpler. Allegorical figures no longer take part in the acting, they only appear as exterior arabesques, so to say, during the choruses. The number of the actors has also decreased, in a word that transformation takes place in the Passion Text which we find in the plain style of the Empire after the dying out of the baroque style.

Finally, in the years 1810—15, came about that great change from the Middle-Ages to modern-times, from the bombastic extravagances of Jesuitic comedy to the purer style of modern drama. That which Father Ottmar Weiss, who was himself a child of the Bavarian mountains, has accomplished in his new dramatisation, stands *just as high* above the Middle-Age «Mystery» as above the *Jesuitic* art of Father Rosner.

We can certainly say that in the outward form of the Play some things, as for example the tableaux, the guardian spirits etc. have passed from Rosner's Play into the Text of Weiss — but then again we cannot say that these latter were the invention of Father Rosner. The Prologue, as interpreter between the Play and the audience, and also the illustrative figures of the angels are already present in the oldest Middle-Age Plays; they form there already a kind of simplified, antique chorus. If we therefore resolve the Text of Father Ottmar Weiss into its chief components, then we distinguish *three* different elements. As the first, we find in it an extremely independent dramatic power, which follows with sure instinct its own clearly planned lines and, referring back to the Gospels as origin, takes from them what suits it best, and turns the same in part to account in a highly skilled manner.

If a later dramatist had written for a secular theatre scenes of such powerful dramatic passion as that of the entry of Christ into Jerusalem, amidst the waving of palms and the shouting of Hosannas by the people, or as that of the stirring, fanatically wild scenes before the Crucifixion, which of their kind are not to be found on any *secular* stage, we should have confidently placed such an

author at the side of our best lights in dramatic literature. But these scenes are simply the creation, the original idea of the peasant's son of Bayersoyen, of the simple country priest of Jesenwang, under the surface of whose high education and religious training a share of popularly characteristic energy, passion, and artlessness is still hidden. That, which Ottmar Weiss here gives us, is no bookworm learning from the study, it is the fresh sentiment of German nationality. The idea which, *in opposition to all former texts*, introducing Christ as already suffering, makes the Saviour condemned to martyrdom appear as the lauded Messiah, cheered by the enthusiastic people, and then shows this people in its whole disgraceful fickleness, and heightens the tragic element in the sufferings of Christ by the contrast between the triumphant entry and the subsequent forsakenness, is in my opinion a dramatic master-piece that might have been worthy of a Shakespeare. The second element, which stands out with exceptional clearness in the new Text, is, in spite of all assertions to the contrary, still that of the *Middle-Ages*. I have already, when citing the Passion Text, pointed out how certain passages of the same have retained their spiritual relationship with the *latest* Text. We find sharply outlined details which have been rescued from the old Text and put into the new. The soul of the people still looks upon us with the traditional eyes of its ancestors, although it no longer wears the stiff dress of Middle-Age folk-literature. The incidents at Bethany, the leave-taking of Christ from His Mother, are, though turned into prose, taken almost word for word from the Middle-Age Play. Likewise the fact that the principal agitators against Christ are the injured traders of the temple — the figure of Pilate which has passed over entirely unchanged in the smallest details from the Middle-Age Play to the new one, and finally the thoroughly typical figures of the Apostles — well if those are not from head to foot genuine figures of Middle-Age art, as if cut out of an old «*Kreuzweg*»-group, then there are no types any more. The Christ of to-day, as also the Peter and Judas, are the century-old incorporations of these personages, and if they no longer speak to us in the same language, if the old doggerel verse has given place to a simple, popular prose — their parts are moulded according to the oldest Plays, and even in their outward appearance the actors fit into this mould. The performers of the various epochs have exactly the same typical heads, almost a sort of family likeness. That is the characteristic Middle-Age element, which has been preserved up to the present day just as well as a Passion by Holbein or Dürer. And now might come as the third component, which we have spoken of when considering Weiss's Text, that, which the author has borrowed from the Jesuit comedies. These are nothing but purely formal matters, such as the employment of tableaux, the increase of the chorus, the external distribution of the Players, and so on. But all that is so thoroughly originally and independently treated, and can be looked upon so completely as a creation of Father Ottmar Weiss, that here too very little or nothing falls to the share of Jesuitic art. — But if we can prove that the Text of Ottmar Weiss is two-thirds his own work and that one third consists of traditional Middle-Age Passion Plays, where does the influence of Jesuitic art come in? We certainly do the work of the Passion Play a great injustice, if we divest it of its nationally characteristic charm, for, apart from the fact that the Ammergauers were no peasants in the usual sense of the word, they were fully and entirely capable of being the spiritual originators of their Play. The Passion Text of that time was written at their request, was laid before the Community,



Teatro olimpico di Palladio in Vicenza.

and approved of by them, and we know that Father Ottmar Weiss upon the advice and under the direction of members of the Community revised the Text performed in the year 1811, whilst his contemporary the worthy teacher Dedler also revised the beautiful music; so that the Passion of 1815 was performed in an exemplary manner, and in a new and perfectly purified and beautified form.

The prologue of the year 1811 still ran:

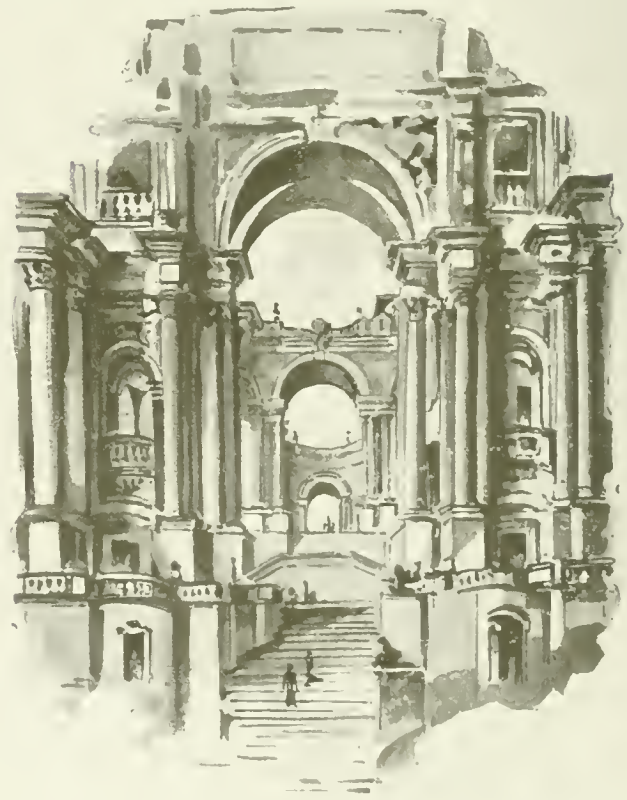
*Hört ihr Sterblichen! Staub vom Staube,
Laut ruft es der Glaube,
Was die Zunge nicht vermag zu stammeln
Mit Dankgefühle solltet ihr*

*Um diese Trauerbühne euch versammeln,
Das grosse Opfer für die Welt
Wird Euren Augen vorgestellt.*

In 1815 was already inserted the beautiful prologue, which according to unauthenticated legends is the work of Allioli, who later translated the Bible. Whether, for the matter of that, they have not confounded him with the good-hearted county judge Allioli, who so encouragingly and helpfully supported the Ammergauers in their Passion Play, is difficult to say. The provost Allioli must at that time have been a young student of 18—19 years of age, and though not absolutely impossible, it is hardly credible, that Father Weiss would have invited him to participate in the work. At any rate this prologue is so fine that, be the writer who he may, he has created a monumental work, which, combined with the music, reproduces the swing and spirit of an Ode by Klopstock. I must confess that the appeal of the Choragus:

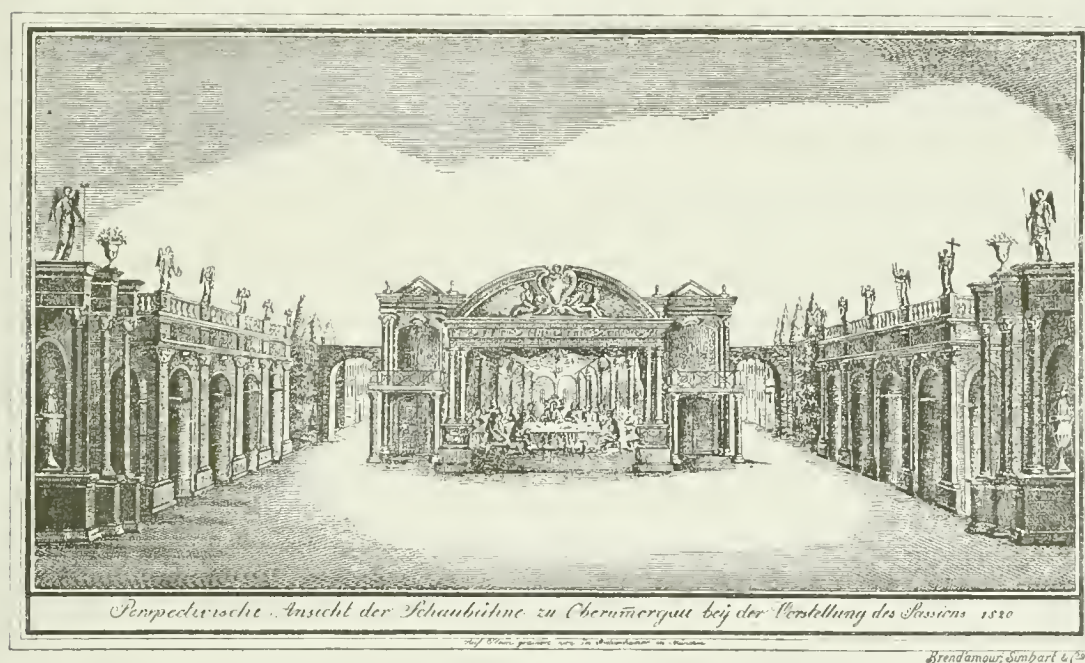
*Wurf zum heiligen Staunen dich nieder
Von Gottes Fluch gebeugtes Geschlecht
Friede Dir, aus Sion Gnade wieder.
Nicht ewig zürnt er der Beleidigte
Ist sein Zürnen gleich gerecht u. s. w.*

has an absolutely thrilling effect. It is as if the assembled humanity was now for the first time conscious of the curse resting upon them.



Theatre of the Jesuit Father Andrea Pozzo in Rome, for the performance of the «Marriage Feast in Cana»; 1685.

And if now Trautmann does not see anything in the theatre of the Passion Village but the stage of the Renaissance transplanted to Old Bavaria through the medium of the Jesuits», still we cannot accept this as an absolute and undeniable fact. If Trautmann finds a somewhat far-fetched resemblance between the Teatro Olimpico at Vicenza, the theatre of the Jesuit Father Andrea Pozzo at Rome and the Passion Stage in Ammergau — I must confess that the same was never particularly evident to me — it proves that all three go back to the antique in their arrangement. Guido Görres points out in detail, in his account of the Oberammergau Passion Play of 1840, the influence of the antique upon religious drama of the Early Christian period. We hear that Gregory of Nazianz, the writer of «the suffering Christ» in the 4th century, himself says that in writing his Passion Play he has had Euripides in his mind's eye — further, Guido Görres recounts in his extremely cleverly written essay, how at Bourges in France they had run up in



Passion Theatre in the year 1820. (From an old lithograph.)

1436 in the arena of a Roman amphitheatre a two-storeyed, *covered* amphitheatre, in which they performed the Acts of the Apostles instead of heathen combats.

Similar events may well have happened in Italy as well as in Germany. Just as we see before us in the meditations of the Prologue or of the announcing angel a sort of abbreviated antique chorus, so have antique influences probably made themselves felt in the arrangement of the stage, especially in a town like Augsburg, the whole artistic and commercial life of which, as Guido Görres himself emphasises, was in continual intercourse with Italy. Added to this the highly learned clergy in the Benedictine convents of those days, who conducted these plays, took the Antique as their model just as well as the Jesuits did later on.

Trautmann says: «Where the Middle-Age part comes in on the present Oberammergau stage, has always been a riddle to me. The stage of the Middle-Ages combined „simultaneously in one space all localities which were necessary for the play. In one place arose, as superstructure, heaven, a few paces distant was a thicket fenced off as the Mount of Olives, another place denoted Pilate's dwelling-place. The scene wanders from one place to another just like, as with children in the playground, simple circles in the gravel stand for a house, a garden, or a shop etc.» this is still no proof, that the Middle-Age Passion Play of Oberammergau took place on this so-called «Mystery» stage. First of all no «heaven» was required, since the whole play took place on earth, and the scene in Hell, as after-play, took place on an entirely altered stage. Now the following struck me in the Play of St. Ulrich and Afra, which has scarcely any scenic directions: whilst Christ is sitting at Supper, Judas goes into the house of Caiaphas, which we can imagine to be to the right of the real stage where the house of Annas now is, and we find ourselves, without the Last Supper being finished or Christ and His disciples having risen, suddenly in the midst of the assembly of the Jewish Council, we witness a short scene in the house of Caiaphas, whilst close at hand the Last Supper of our Lord is at the same time proceeding.

We also see how during the Crucifixion, which is enacted on the front of the stage with the whole attendant multitude, people continuously run into Pilate's house, speak with him and take messages to those assembled under the Cross. The scene here therefore cannot possibly «wander about», for they can neither carry about the heavy table for the Last Supper nor the Cross, which is as high as a house, and firmly fixed in the ground. It is not of course meant that *every* Middle-Age stage was exactly fitted up after the pattern described by Trautmann. Guido Görres, who was certainly an authority on religious plays of the Middle-Ages, describes the most diverse kinds of stage fittings and arrangements. We must therefore suppose that, for the representations of the Sufferings of Christ, where the Crucifixion is carried out on the open stage, the present arrangement was prevalent; namely, in the middle, the stage with movable scenery, to the left and right the houses of the High Priest and Pilate, hard by the streets of the town, through which the long procession of the Cross can wind. I found this opinion of mine also confirmed by a note in the Text of 1662, where, after the scene between Judas and Mary in Bethany, it says: «Exit Mary together with the other women, *not* where Judas goes out; then Christ comes with the eleven disciples to the garden (Gethsemane), which must be *arranged beforehand*». We have then here to do with a perfectly regular scene-shifting, and I believe that necessity has brought about this arrangement, like so much else. Imagine for once the Crucifixion with its three Crosses, each four metres high, its masses of people and soldiers, in the narrow space of a completely closed-in stage, it would be crowded to suffocation. Just as little are the intimate scenes at Simon the Leper's or the Last Supper imaginable in an *unenclosed* space. It was another thing in those Plays, in which, as in that of Sebastian Wild, the Crucifixion took place at the back of the stage. Probably in the old Text the Crosses did not stand, as they do now, framed by the inner stage, but were erected right in front.

In our present Passion Play of to-day they have to be on the inner-stage, because the horrible preparations, the nailing-on, etc. etc. are hidden from the

spectators by the curtain. All this takes place on a concealed stage, whilst on the front of the stage the Chorus sings its dirges and when the curtain rises, Christ lies already fastened to the Cross.

In the Middle-Age Play it was quite different, there the nailing-on took place on the open stage before the eyes of the on-lookers with a horrible minuteness. And after repeatedly reading the whole scene I always come back anew to the conviction, that the whole long Way of the Cross and the Crucifixion itself could only be performed on a stage which is arranged exactly like the present one. The executioners, the guard, the Jewish rabble, the thieves with their long heavy crosses, Christ with His Cross, the soldiers, some on horseback, this long procession has to make its way at a very slow pace on the relatively small stage in a village cemetery, so that all the incidents, the meeting with the sorrowing women, Simon of Cyrene, and the holy Veronica, then the falling three times under the Cross, can take place. This is only then feasible when it passes along the whole length of the street, appears again on the middle-stage, which has been fitted up as a landscape, and goes past the house of Pilate, who watches the procession from his house, on to the proscenium, the Mount of Calvary, where the Crucifixion now takes place in all its cruel details in full view of the audience. This mode of arrangement was in use up to the year 1815. The text-book of this latter year combines the Way of the Cross and the Crucifixion in one scene, and the short headings between the chants run: Christ laden with the Cross is led to the place of execution — lamented by a few — stripped and crucified. Not until after the year 1620 do we find in the register the disposition that is still used: «Christ laden with the Cross, going to Calvary, the procession goes from the *Pilatusgasse*, over the proscenium, through the portal, and out at the town-gate; when the women who follow the procession have departed, the curtain falls, and Calvary is prepared. After the music the curtain rises, the thieves are already on their crosses; when Christ is dead, the back half of the stage is shut off, and the grave made ready. How the setting up of the heavy crosses was to be managed, which could not possibly have been made fast, since they were still lying flat on the ground, is unfortunately not mentioned at all in the Text, we only read the following directions, certainly very important for whoever was taking the part of Christ. After the nails have been driven in:

«They now remove the rope from his feet, and bind him with strips of linen round the body, hands, and arms, round the breast and loins, so that, should he become unconscious, he will not fall from the Cross, etc.» It would almost seem therefore as if it sometimes happened that the actor fainted.

But now come, in reference to the breaking of the limbs and the Descent from the Cross, a whole quantity of small scenic directions which still hold good, and prove that perfectly accurate and traditional scenic appointments were in existence for the Play in Ammergau, and which have been handed down by children and children's children to our time. So for instance it was *at that time already accurately* indicated that the spear, with which the Roman centurion pierces the side of Christ, and which even to-day is looked upon as a wonder of theatrical mechanism, should be hollow inside and filled with a red colour to denote the Blood. Just this adhesion to these small details of nearly three hundred years

standing, convinces me that also the organisation of the whole stage dates from that period, and with the tenacity, with which the Ammergauers hold to their old traditions, has transmitted itself down to the present day.

We must also conclude from the Text of St. Ulrich and Afra, that the houses of Pilate and Caiaphas were sort of open halls, the interior of which you could see into. It was however probably difficult for those inside to make themselves heard, and so, later, a kind of verandah on columns was built, as is shown in the sketch from the year 1820, where the reading of the sentence, the breaking



The Crucifixion in the old Passion Plays.

of the staff, etc. could take place and be visible over the heads of the surging crowd beneath. Later on when the original early empire style became still plainer, and the pointed gables were made, and the whole approached an incorrect imitation of the antique, the fine, broad verandahs supported on columns, were turned into two narrow balconies, which considerably restricted the movements of the actors, and which were not replaced by more convenient, raised platforms until the year 1890. I believe that there never was here any intention of taking architectural principles into consideration, as Trautmann thinks, who sees in

the two balconies the *motif*, so much in vogue in Jesuitic buildings, of an entrance arch consisting of two columns and a balcony overhead. In the first place the Ammergau stage, as is shown by the accounts of the community, has been erected *solely* and exclusively by Ammergauers, and to judge by the incredibly small outlay required for its construction up to 1811, it cannot possibly have been more than a wooden scaffolding with some little decorative ornamentation. A theatre with architectural embellishments would scarcely have paid, considering how seldom performances were given — in 1800 they only played five times — and the low prices — in 1790 the prices for the first places were left to the generosity of the visitors, the second places cost 12 *kreuzers*, the third 6 *kr.* In the year 1701 the expenses of the Passion Play according to the account books of the Community amounted to about 60 *fl.*, of which 12 *fl.* 30 *kr.* were due to Bernhard Steinle for having arranged and conducted the Passion Play, 19 *fl.* to the painters Sebastian Würmseer and Martin Faistenmantel for painting and for colour, 10 *fl.* for drinks to the actors, according to the old custom, 2 *fl.* presented to the trumpeter of Ettal, 12 *kr.* for powder. We see then that a costly architectural decoration had never been thought of. Nor do we find anywhere the slightest indication that in the building of the Passion Theatre any outside builder or workman whatsoever had been engaged.

The wood for the stage was obtained from forests belonging to the community, was fashioned by Ammergau carpenters, and painted by Ammergau painters;



Passion Theatre in the year 1850.

nowhere do we find the influence of outsiders. We find however one thing, which shows us again the conservative nature of the Ammergau people; namely that all the trade relations of Ammergau tend in the same direction as in the Middle-Ages, that is to say towards the old imperial town of Augsburg.

This peculiarity gives us also the means of coming to a conclusion as to what the influences were which were brought to bear upon the Passion Play. Not to Munich, with its Italian opera performances, with its brilliant Jesuitic comedies, do the lines of the art and trade connections run, the example and influence of Munich seem in no way to have served as a standard for the Ammergauers; *everything*, even down to the music-paper and the silver edging for the costumes, was procured in Swabia. Schongau, Landsberg, Augsburg, even Nuremberg supplied the stuffs and ornaments for the Passion Play, and well into the 19th century it was still the custom, rendered as it were sacred by old tradition, to have everything sent from Augsburg.

All these things, together with the remark made by Trautmann, that for Father Rosner's Play a theatre, such as was used in 1850 and up to the present day, did *not yet* exist, recalled more and more to me the already entertained idea that the stage, which Trautmann designates as the type of the Jesuitic stage, has

altogether only sprung into existence during the last century, and presumably was first connected with Ottmar Weiss' new edition.



Passion Theatre in the year 1860. (From the painting in the Gregori Chapel at Oberammergau.)

I said to myself, that, if the simple theatre sufficed for the magnificent performances of Rosner's Play, which were put on the stage with all available decorative resources, it is not imaginable that a new, architecturally constructed theatre would have to be built for Knipfelberger's simplified drama, all the more so, as just at that period continual disturbances, through war, lack of money and consequent bad attendance, rendered the performing of the Play difficult. These opinions of mine were strengthened by a picture of the theatre from the year 1820, which represents the theatre in the purest empire style. Now I have thoroughly examined the accounts of the community *re*-expenses for the Passion Play of the year 1790, but could nowhere find even the slightest traces which would indicate that the theatre had been re-built. We find entries of trees, long and short beams, boards, nails, painters, locksmiths, carpenters, we find the note, recurring in every Passion Play, «*Ausgab vor den Gottesacker den Zaun und die Mauer und andres wiederherzustellen*». We find all fees entered, even the fee of the teacher Dedler for the «*Konbeniren*» of the Passion music, to the amount of 53 fl., but nowhere an indication which might suggest that anything had been renewed in the theatre, or that there had been any deviation from established precedent. I was almost giving up in despair, when in the almost illegible, untidily written accounts for 1815, besides larger items for theatrical requisites, I was struck by the entry: «*Dem titl. H. H. Fruhmesser für Legung des Planes zum Passionstheater und Mahlung desselben 41 fl.*» And again in the accounts for the year 1820: «*Dem titl. H. H. Fruhmessbeneficiaten Nicol. Unhoch dahier wurden für die im Jahre 1815 geführte Bau-Direktion noch nachbezahlt 25 fl.*» Now everything was clear to me, even the strange, idealized picture of the Passion Theatre of 1820, which most probably had been drawn on stone, and painted, direct from Unhoch's coloured design. This beneficiary Unhoch was descended from an old Ammergau artist's family, and was born in the Passion village in 1762. His brothers were noted cabinet-makers, by whom wonderful, inlaid Empire furniture, real works of art, still exist in Ammergau. Unhoch's house, together with a large quantity of old things, came into the possession of the *Forstcher* Michael Diemer, the grandfather of my husband,

and among them a beautifully inlaid Unhoch bookcase, which however at the death of uncle Johann Diemer passed into the hands of the widow, who took it to Kempten with her. In this beneficiary Unhoch were certainly combined the artistic elements of Oberammergau and the old traditions of the Passion Play. When twelve years old he entered the convent school of Ettal as a chorister, where he remained seven years, later on he studied in the High



House of the family Unhoch in Oberammergau.

Schools at Augsburg, and then went to the «*Weltpriesterseminar*» at Maria Dorfen, founded by Daser. In Dezember 1788 he was ordained priest, and celebrated his «*Primiz*» in the village church of his native place at the Feast of the Epiphany in 1789. After a long residence as priest in Württemberg, and later in Bavaria at Inkofen and Bergkirchen, he took over the benefice for early mass in Ammergau in 1801, and Daisenberger speaks highly of him as a man of great intelligence with much practical knowledge. He introduced the holiday-school into Ammergau, and founded the school of drawing. He taught them bee-keeping and fruit-culture, and designed the plan for a new school-house, which was erected under his superintendence, and in favour of which the Ammergau musicians waived their right to a stipendium, due to them from the endowment of the devout priest Daser, and from henceforth performed the church music gratis. Also in 1817 he re-built the house for early mass, which had been burned down, and fell out with the community about the rights of ownership, so that he had himself transferred to Garmisch, and his wish to die in Ammergau did not reach fulfilment. He ended his days in 1833 in Garmisch, as beneficiary of the Nikasi chapel.

The following extract from his biography, which can be found in the archives of the benefice for early mass, gives us more detailed information about the Theatre.

In 1815 the community wished to perform the Passion and the directors asked me if I would attend to the construction of a new theatre. Finally, after much persuasion and entreating, I undertook this difficult business. I measured the ground, planned the designs, made a model, and in the month of October at last began to build, and before the winter the foundations were already finished. All through the winter carpenters were working in the cemetery, joiners in the parish barn outside the village, and painters in the upper room of the Hansjörgen inn. This work went on until Whitsuntide, and I had to be at six o'clock in the morning every day at the theatre, to direct the people. I will not mention the many annoyances and cavilings that I had to put up with, but I would not break my word once given for a good cause. In the end I was paid for all my trouble with 3 carolins, *horresco referens*. Although I had undertaken all responsibility, and had promised to stand good for everything. Yet several theatrical authorities from Munich and Augsburg have highly praised the theatre, although the Ammergauers were not very satisfied with it. Why? Now I imagine the case to have been somewhat as follows: The old stage, originally divided into three, as I have pointed out when describing the Middle-Age Passion Play, was in any case an old-fashioned and countrified affair, rejected by the educated Viennese, Father Rosner, for his altered Text, and was later no more in use. Now, for the new edition by Father Ottmar Weiss, the necessity for another arrangement of the stage proved more urgent than ever, and at anyrate in the year 1811, when Father Ottmar Weiss personally conducted the rehearsals, — in the expenditure accounts for the Passion stands: «*Till. Pater Otmar öfters beim Spielen und Brobieren von Ettal auf u. abgeführt 4 fl. 36 kr.*» — to judge by the exceptionally large outlay for building material, the stage had been technically altered and enlarged, whereby a better, and architecturally finer re-construction had probably already been decided upon for the future. I have remarked once before, with what veneration Father Ottmar has utilized the old Passion text, and the old stage arrangements,



Members of the High Council. (Passion Play 1850.)

travelling expenses of a deputation, which probably had been sent to Jesenwang to obtain his advice respecting «Passion» matters. At anyrate he empowered the beneficiary Unhoch to represent him at the Passion Play, and approved of the latter's design for a new theatre.

When we come to consider the Passion text as composed by Ottmar Weiss, we see clearly that any other arrangement of the stage is impossible. The rapid and frequent scene-shifting, the alternating of the Chorus with the acting, the excited and surging crowds, the effective grouping of which would be hardly possible on an ordinary stage, all this necessitates the above mentioned disposition. The grand effect of the scene on Pilate's balcony, where, high above the raging, roaring sea of the frenzied mob, the noble form of the Roman, Pilate, and the pale martyr-figure of the *Ecce homo* are visible, would be unconceivable if these occurrences took place on level ground. The fine dramatic talent of Father Ottmar Weiss had led him to realize that, and, thanks to this sentiment, the verandahs, as shown in the picture of 1820, were constructed. Consequently the birth of the proper Passion-stage occurred at a time, when the power of the Jesuits had long been shattered, when their influence and that of the baroque style had ceased to exist.

which had stood the test of centuries, must have appeared to him the most suitable for his work. But Father Ottmar, before he could have his improved work put on the stage, was appointed priest at Jesenwang in 1812, which however did not prevent him from again thoroughly revising his Play. He remained too in communication with his beloved Ammergau, and the parish account-books of the year 1815 show the



Caiaphas. (Passion Play 1850.)

As regards the costumes of the Passion Play, Trautmann may be right in thinking that they were taken from the wardrobes of the processions and Jesuitic Plays, as the following circumstances show: Namely, up to the year 1820, the community had its own costumes for the principal actors, but the dresses for the people, the Roman soldiers etc., were borrowed from outside convents, towns, or societies:

in the 17th century, mostly from Schongau or Rottenbuch. Later, we read in the parish account-books every year an entry about the borrowing of clothes, for instance in 1790: «2 Mann vor Kleyder von Ettal abhollen, Taglohn und Zöhrung zahlt 1 fl. 60 kr.», then again in the same ledger: «dem Seminary Schneid von Ettal, wie man die Kleyder zurückgebracht Trinkgelt und zum Trunkh bezahlt 42 kr.» For 1811 stands: «dem Georg Lang nach dem Spiel die Kleider herzurichten und nachher Landsberg und andern Plezen heimzustellen u. s. w.»

Then in 1815 we find the already mentioned large purchase of theatre requisites, which probably were required through the re-building of the theatre.

In 1820 we find, «dass dem Schulmeister Wohlich in Murnau für hergelichene Theaterkleider das Douceur von 5 fl. 23 kr. behändigel wurde».

Further, «dass der Fuhrmann Stadler von Schongau für den Transport der Kürasse von Landsberg hierher und retour, dann als Fracht für die Exemplare und Billets von Landsberg hierher 6 fl. bekommen hat.»

Not until after 1830 do the entries about borrowed articles cease. Probably the increasing success of the Passion Play induced the community to furnish itself with its own «Passion» wardrobe, and the dresses for the Chorus where perhaps, as suggested by Trautmann, bought from the wardrobe of a former Jesuitic theatre, or new ones had been cut to the pattern of the borrowed ones. Here therefore Jesuitic influences could really be traced, but their connection with the Oberammergau Passion Play is just as incidental, as the institution of the horrible, dark blue tail-coats and white breeches of the Ammergau village musicians, which in 1840 had put Guido Görres, who thought they were black, into a state of nervous excitement. Such little evidences of bad taste often came into the village through



Mary. (Passion Play 1850.)



Magdalene. (Passion Play 1850.)

some mischance or a falsely understood change in the fashions, and were just as quickly thrown aside again.

Moreover the barbaric head-dress of the «guardian spirits» only owed its origin to a passing wave, for before and afterwards the prints show us other costumes. If now we come to sum up the result of my arguments, we shall find I think that I have made two points clear. Firstly the connection between our present Passion Play and the Middle-Age production of the people, and that as far back as the 15th century, secondly the certainty that our present «Passion» stage was not constructed until the 19th century, but yet was still based on the Middle-Age one, that therefore the Jesuitic comedy of Rosner was nothing but a propped up branch, which in a short time withered up, whilst the vigorous trunk grew on in the same direction up to our time. With that, I think I have sufficiently disproved the views of the writer Karl Trautmann, whom however I highly esteem. I have repeatedly shown how highly I value the excellent, and poetically as well as historically interesting work of the historian in question. I believe however, that Trautmann, prompted by the researches into the art of the Jesuits carried out in recent years by various workers, and in the endeavour to fully meet their demands, has allowed himself to be carried away so far as to extend their influence into regions where it simply never existed. The art of the baroque period, handled with so much skill by the Jesuits, always reminds me of the beautiful words of Winkelmann: «The arts, which depend on drawing, have, like all inventions, sprung from necessity; afterwards beauty was aimed at, and finally ensued the superfluous», and since in the art of the baroque period the superfluous was already included, it was incapable of further development. It could only remain stationary or dissolve away, and upon the complete intoxication of the senses by the rococo style must naturally follow the prodigious sobering-down after-effects of the empire and bastard antique styles.

Had the Passion Play been only a production of the baroque style, it would have reached its zenith with the same, and would then have fallen like over-ripe fruit, which in decaying yields its seed-spores to the four winds. The work, which had struck root in the healthy national spirit of the Middle-Ages, in a vigorous capable childhood, already contained in itself the possibility of enduring up to the present day.

The old account-books of the Passion offer altogether a highly interesting chapter in the history of the «Passion». First of all we learn for certain that they performed in the cemetery up to the year 1830. For this purpose the fence and the outside wall were each time taken down, and the place enlarged by enclosing the adjacent pieces of ground. The probably neighbouring house of Jakob Haag was always hired as a dressing room for the actors, and we find that «a separate room» was reserved for the *Christus*. A great source of expense were the constables who had to be provided. Thus we read in 1811:

*Ausgaben vor den Comisar von K. B. Landgericht Schongau zur Aufsicht:
Denen titl. Assessoren bey 8 Spiel macht in Summa 21 Tage à jeder
Tag 3 fl. 30 kr. macht 75 fl. 30 kr. Dem Gerichtsdienner detto vor
21 Tag à jeder 1 fl. = 21 fl.*

Then follow the accounts for board and lodging of the same, in short, when added up, the police force cost the community 219 fl. 53 kr., a large sum, when we come to consider that the entire receipts of the Passion Play only amounted to 1538 fl., which were exactly balanced by the expenses.

And in other respects also we find all kinds of interesting details in the old accounts. Thus for example the entry for the year 1790 *«an Ihro Hochwürden Herrn Pfarrer, vor ein Present an Zucker und Kaffe 9 fl. 40 kr. an Hh. Innocenz Ebenfelds in Untlerammergau vier gchabte Mühe an obigen 4 fl. 48 kr. Herrn Pfarrers Köchin Trinkgeld 27 kr.*

We see that a liberal spirit pervaded the Oberammergauers, they rewarded service rendered, in an adequate manner.

But what is meant by the entry, which we read likewise in the year 1790: *«dem georg gruber Maurer vor das Unschuldige Häusl höher zu machen zahlt 1 fl. 6 kr.»* I cannot, with the best intentions, make out.

In the same year we find too an entry of 24 kr. *«vor Pomade zum Haar aufmachen».*

In 1811 we read: *«dem Rochus Lang vor Bärt anleimen und andern Dienst bei jedem Spiel 45 kr. Summa 6 fl.»*

Further more *«dem Christus vor ein ganz gestricktes Beinkleid 7 fl. 12 kr. «Denen Schechern 4 Ellen weises Duch zu denen Schandiecher 4 fl. 48 kr. «Dem Herrn Georg Luy Bold Souffler bay allen Spiel vor seine grosse Mische 11 fl.»*

How simple everything was at that time is shown by the large entries for sheep's wool which the peasants bought, and used partly for beards and partly for trimming their costumes.

In 1820 we read: *«Der Sarah Bierling für Zubereitung gebackener Speisen zur Scene bei Simon 14 fl. 42 kr.»* and *«dem Wirt und Metzger Johann Dedler werden für die Braten zum Abendmahl bezahlt laut Conto 10 fl. 23 kr.»*

The ass for the Passion Play and the powder for the signal-guns were, for the time being, procured in Unterammergau, and in the account was entered *«für Ueberlassung und Zuführung des Esels, welcher in jedem Spiele bei dem Einzug Xti in Jerusalem gebraucht wurde, 9 fl. 36 kr.»*

In the year 1820 the priest of Ettal personally assisted with the music, for which we find *14 fl. 47 kr. für Fuhrwerk* quoted, and in addition to this is recorded: *«An den Nikolaus Niklas Wirt in Unterammergau wurden bezahlt für 4 Mass rother Elsässer-Wein, welche dem Herrn Pfarrer in Ettal wegen seiner Aushilfe bei der Musik als Douceur abgegeben wurden 2 fl. 40 kr.»*

In 1830 the Passion Play entered upon a new career, inasmuch as it was removed from the narrow limits of the cemetery to the present site, and therewith became universally renowned. The cause of this removal was the ill-will of Aloys Plutz, parish priest at that time, who refused permission for the performance of the Play in the cemetery, in order to spoil the Play, and in so doing contributed enormously to its greatness and advancement. The Passion theatre was now immediately built on a considerably larger scale in the present place. Probably the theatre was at that time already transformed, and remained so, with the pointed gables and narrow balconies, and the covered seats were probably built at the

same time. The Passion accounts of this year afford little that is interesting, unless perhaps it is the item «36 auf Papendeckel gemalte Äpfel» (36 apples painted on card-board), which most likely were hung on the Tree of Knowledge. More interesting matters are however recorded again in the year 1840. Under the extremely energetic and capable *Gemeindevorsteher* Michael Diemer, the grandfather of my husband, the Passion Play must have made rapid strides. According to the description of geistl. Rath Daisenberger, and the accounts of old people, who knew him, Diemer seems to have been as talented a Passion player as he was a circumspect magistrate. He was, musically, a very gifted man, with a splendid voice, and according to accounts is said to have been the best Choragus of the last fifty years, whose vocal powers and acting must have far excelled those of his son Johannes.

Under him, things took quite a new bent, which considerably advanced the good cause.

Above all, the theatre was immensely improved. We read for instance «für Abänderung der Logen und des Theaters», further «dem Alois Lechner zur neuen Anlage der Logen u. Stiege» etc., then «auf Weegbekkissung zum Theater», from which we see that good roads were provided for. But besides that we read, «dass dem Kgl. Hofchirurgen Hh. Frankl in München für 22 Stück daselbst in Seide und Goldschnitt gebundene Programme, Auslage mit 44 fl. vergütet wurde». We see that the Ammergauers had developed a taste for luxury, an outcome of which was undoubtedly the hapless dark blue swallow-tails and white trousers of the musicians, which perhaps grandfather Diemer had even introduced, for uncle Diemer still spoke of them in his reminiscences as being a splendid innovation. The above mentioned Court Surgeon J. Nep. Frankl seems in fact to have been a great patron of the Ammergauers, and altogether a many-sided man, for he arranges everything imaginable for them: the binding of the special copies of the text-book for the royalties, putting articles in the various Munich papers, the printing of «40,000 tickets for admission», «6 yards of muslin», and a large entry for «eider-down». I ultimately learnt that he was a native of Ammergau, which explains his ready willingness in sacrificing so much for his birthplace. But also the duties of soliciting attendance by means of deputies now commenced. A journey of the magistrate Diemer and Johann Lang to Munich, respecting the invitation of royalty and the nobility, when the two delegates spent twenty-two days there (!), cost 85 fl. 50 kr. For a journey to Partenkirchen, to express their thanks to the King and Queen of Saxony, who had visited the Passion Play from there, the «Gemeindepfleger», Mathäus Drexler, received 2 fl.

But we also find a noble deed of charity in the parish account-books, namely the invitation of the deaf and dumb children in Munich to the Passion Play, and the entertaining of the same at the expense of the community, a rather costly affair for the parish. Thus for the feeding of the same is recorded «36½ Pfd. Kalbfleisch à 9 kr. und 31½ Pfd. Ochsenfleisch à 9 kr. sowie Bier und Brod». In spite of these many expenses, and of the fact that the whole arrangement of the Passion performances of this year shows magnificent and noble features, which were already based on a world-wide intercourse, the receipts amounted to 16,239 fl. 48 kr., whilst the expenses only reached 12,146 fl. 49 kr., so that a balance remained of 4092 fl. 99 kr. This money was, it appears, deposited with

the district judicial court, for we read: «*Dem GVorsteher Michael Diemer u. GBevollmächtigten Martin Kirchmaier für den Transport eines Depositums v. 4000 fl. mittelst Fuhrwerk zum kgl. Landgericht 2 Tagsdiäten nebst 36 kr. Auslage 4 fl. 36.*» Some quaint combinations are to be found in the accounts, thus, in the same entry with the expenses of the «GVorsteher» for a journey to Munich to again invite the royal family, stands at the same time «*19 kr. für Besorgung eines Trommel-seiles*» (19 kr. for the purchase of rope). Then again «*der Crescenz Maier Wascherlohn f. das Christus und Schächerkleid, dann für Nachtlager d. k. Gendarmerie vergütet 8 fl. 43*» (paid to Crescenz Maier for washing the clothes of Christ and the thieves, then for quartering the k. Gendarmerie, 8 fl. 43).

The most interesting thing however, which I have subsequently read in these parish accounts for the year 1840, is the record, of a large purchase of costumes in Kohlgrub. This «Passion» wardrobe does not seem though to have been made in Kohlgrub itself, but to have been bought by Kohlgrub tradesmen in Mittenwald. For in Kohlgrub a «Passion» was only once given, namely in the year 1748, in which sixty-four persons took part, using a text which emanated from the convent of Polling, and which with a few alterations was taken from the Weilheim Play of Johann Aelbl. Probably the costumes for this performance also came from the convent of Polling. In Mittenwald on the other hand, a «Passion», making free use of Weiss's Text, was acted as late as 1834, for which a Munich composer named Leibl had written the music. This Passion Play it seems did not answer, for it was given up, and the theatre wardrobe, which must have been in good condition, together with the scenery was sold.

We read therefore in the parish account for 1840, «*20. Febr. Für die von Joh. Mich. Mangold und Burkhardt von Kohlgrub angekaufte Theatergarderobe und Requisiten samt Fuhrlohn hierher kömmt in Anrechnung 356 fl. 32 kr. do. den 21. Febr. dem Joh. Burkhardt von Kohlgrub für den Transport der angekauften Garderobe und Requisiten von Mittenwald hierher mittelst 4 Fuhren à 6 fl. 30 kr. samt 46 kr. Trinkgeld 26 fl. 40 kr.*» I presume, that probably, with the discontinuation of the Play at Mittenwald, a portion of the wardrobe was acquired cheaply by dealers of Kohlgrub, and was then re-sold to Ammergauers, whilst the still remaining part of the wardrobe and theatrical requisites were later on bought up directly by the Ammergauers. For we read that they paid their deputy, *Anton Lang für eine Reise nach Mittenwald bei Abholung der Theaterrequisiten 2 Tagesdiäten à 2 fl. 30 kr. also 5 fl.* Thus my supposition in respect to the origin of the barbaric head-dress of the guardian spirits is strikingly verified, the same evidently came from the Mittenwald «Passion» stage which was under the influence of Munich Jesuits.

With this I conclude my investigations into the parish accounts, of which those of 1840 are, so far, the clearest, most easy of reference, and the best kept. I must say that I was impressed with the fact, that, under the presidency of grandfather Diemer, a well managed, orderly, and progressive state of affairs must have existed. The account also gives information concerning the disposal of the 4000 odd florins: «*1000 fl. wurden zur Tilgung der Gemeindeschulden, 100 fl. zur Kirche für Anschaffung neuer Paramenten, 400 fl. zur Erbauung eines Armenhauses, 500 fl. zur Erbauung eines Gemeindestadels behufs daraufbewahrung des Theaterholzes und Requisiten.*»

Der übrige Betrag wurde laut Protokoll zum Fond hiesiger Elementarschule, insbesondere für die seiner Zeit allenfalls notwendig werdende Anstellung eines Hilfslehrers etc. etc. angewiesen.

We see that in the years between 1820 and 1840 the Ammergauers progressed with seven-league boots. Ammergau had now again acquired its historical importance, and from henceforth the Passion Play gained favour in the eyes of the world.

The judicial conditions from 1790 to 1840 are also interesting.

The heading of the first account runs:

Passions Rechnung:

In dem Jahre 1790 Welche Einer hochgnädigsten Ghrichts und Grund Herrschaft in aller untterthänigkeit, (durch die der Zeit verordnete Gemeins Vorsther) ist vorgezeigt worden. This *Ghrichtsherrschaft* was of course Ettal.

In 1811 and 1815 the accounts were laid before the judicial court of Schongau, to which Ammergau later belonged, and in 1830 before the judicial court of Werdenfels.

In 1845 ensued the appointment of the priest Aloys Daisenberger as pastor of Oberammergau, a highly esteemed and learned man in literature and science, who from this time up to his death in 1883 remained the leading spirit and friendly counsellor of the Ammergau Passion Play. He at once set about a revision of Ottmar Weiss's Text, confining himself however, as he says in his writings of the year 1850, solely to the alteration of several expressions which had become antiquated, or were too coarse, or too sentimental, and to the shortening of many long spun-out speeches. The words of the songs were for several reasons left intact; thus the so-called *Exemplare* were printed exactly the same size as those of 1840, and were, with the exception of a few omissions, exactly similar to them. Here too music is introduced in the scene where Job appears. These are Daisenberger's very words.

Those, who wish to remain true to historical facts, must tread thorny paths: by reason of dry matter-of-fact dates they must destroy illusions, break down pious traditions, and wound a number of faithful souls by having to oppose their long-cherished ideals. It is the general belief in Ammergau that the geistl. Rath Daisenberger was the renewer and restorer of the Passion Text. Now I am obliged to say though, that, with all the respect which I entertain for the splendid character of this man, who will only be properly and fully appreciated by posterity, this title does not belong to him. Daisenberger was a distinguished, good, and noble man, a master-mind in every respect, and what he has done to promote the Passion Play, to animate it with his spirit, has never been done by anybody before him and will be done by nobody after him.

I shall come to speak of him again later, for his influence was too important to be so lightly passed over; but the only thing that really can *not* be said of him is that he *renewed* the Passion Text. Daisenberger has, out of respect for his teacher Weiss, as he himself says, altered absolutely nothing in the order of the narration of events in the Text written by Weiss. His alterations, including those which he undertook later, in the 'sixties, confine themselves chiefly to the text of the music, the verses of which he improved, and to abbreviations, better scenic arrangements, paraphrasing certain speeches, etc. An original work, or even a

renovation only, Daisenberger's Text has never been. He has composed some very fine passages for the vocal music. Thus, for instance, he has given the prologue a nobler form, and has inserted the beautiful verse:

*Doch von ferne von Kalvarias Höhen | Aus des Kreuzbaums Zweigen wehen,
Leuchtet durch die Nacht ein Morgenglüh'n, | Friedenslüfte durch die Welten hin.»*

Altogether he has thoroughly purified the vocal score, and certainly converted the prose part into a language intelligible in our day. I believe that it was *because* he was of a *true* poetic nature, which, in addition to a delicate sense of the really good, bore a deep respect for the intellectual work of others, that he imposed upon himself this wise moderation in his revisal. And for that reason the same has proved itself to be the best, right down to the present day, and not one of all the many Passion Texts, with which the Ammergauers were positively assailed by would-be poets, could approach even within measurable distance of the Weiss-Daisenberger Text. For instance, there was a noted *savant*, who had written a Passion Text in Middle-Age style, and who wanted to force it upon the Ammergauers at any cost.

But the Ammergauers were threatened by the greatest danger in the year 1888. I am going to treat this matter more in detail, because it has reached publicity distorted by misinformed writers, such as W. Wyl, and I can vouch for the authenticity of my statements. The matter stands namely as follows: the government of Upper-Bavaria had suddenly hit upon the idea that the Passion Play needed *new Text* and *new music*, and had arranged it so, that the latter should be composed by a Munich man, a musician of repute, the vocal text and the verse should be written by a high church-dignitary of Munich, and the re-construction of the prose text should be put into the hands of an old friend of Ammergau, my mother, Frau v. Hillern.

Now it had certainly always been a favourite idea of hers to again thoroughly revise the prose text in the spirit of the late geistl. Rath Daisenberger, to cut out lengthy passages, to do away with too frequent repetitions, and in particular to re-introduce the scene with the unbelieving Thomas. For she was of the opinion that the Resurrection of Christ requires to a certain extent a stronger emphasis, a more human exemplification than that which the legendary and fantastic final Ascension-apotheosis offers, and that just the closing words of Christ Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed, contain so to say the quintessence of the Gospel. On the occasion of a visit from the late Right Reverend Archbishop of Steichele to Oberammergau, my mother had mentioned the idea to His Grace in the course of conversation, and the reverend gentleman was quite enthusiastic about it. One fine day Frau v. Hillern, without any move on her part, as I can positively affirm, received a letter from President v. Pfeuffer, who was entirely unknown to her, with the request, that she would take part in the re-formation of the Passion Text. My mother, who, through her long residence in Oberammergau and her connection with the Passion leaders of that place, had become already too much imbued with the Ammergau spirit, wrote, instead of an answer, a detailed statement, which she sent to the government, with whom it still probably lies, and which perhaps later will form an interesting contribution to the history of the Passion Play. The

main idea in this essay, which for want of space cannot be printed here, was, that everything which should be done for the Passion Play must emanate from the Ammergauers themselves, that a Passion Play which is constructed in music, prose, and vocal text by men educated in big cities, cannot possibly be a production of the *people*, and would be lacking in the simpleness and originality, which such a work must decidedly possess if it is to produce an effect upon mankind. My mother has been accused of wanting, in co-operation with the government or influenced by it, to force a new Passion Text upon the Ammergauers. I can thoroughly and conscientiously refute this supposition when I state that as a matter of fact Frau v. Hillern has *never* written a Passion Text, and has never, anterior to the afore-mentioned request, corresponded with the government in respect to Passion matters. Frau v. Hillern has never made it a secret, that she has always considered the already referred-to alterations, carried out according to Daisenberger's sentiments, to be desirable, and has also often spoken about it with the leaders of the Passion Play. But this always took place with the presumption that she was in *perfect accord* with the Ammergauers, and in *harmony with their own* artistic ideas.

The government in Munich however was of another opinion. They resolved without further hesitation to introduce their new Text, together with the music, into Ammergau. But now the old sense of liberty and independence in the Ammergauers awoke. With the passionateness, peculiar to the hot-blooded artistic folk, the whole village rose as one man against the resolution of the government, and this defence, so justifiable in itself, against encroachments which were antagonistic to their most sacred feelings, even to their old privileges, had only one disadvantage, it struck the innocent with the guilty. If it was acting in a manly way and in the spirit of Ammergau traditions, to oppose the authorities in Munich, it is, on the other hand, an open question whether it was dealing rightly, and in accordance with the old noble Ammergau spirit, to reject the assistance of a woman who, living with and for the Ammergauers, had given them countless proofs of her love and friendship, as well as of her devotion to the sacred cause of the Passion Play. The Fathers, who up to then had revised the work, were also no natives of Ammergau, not even the old Daisenberger, and yet they were acknowledged by the Ammergauers, and had thoroughly and completely acquired the spirit of the same. But the storm raged, and blindly enveloped friend and foe, and it still continued to rage long after my mother, who had refused her assistance at the first signs of opposition on the part of the Ammergauers, and the government itself had definitely given up the plan.

And how just too the feeling of the Ammergauers was in not putting up with the interference of the government, is shown by the alterations in the vocal text, which, as a compromise between the Ammergauers and the government, were indeed printed in the text books, but *not sung*, and which transmogrify the good old verse in a manner which robs it completely of the charm of its naive and intimate character. These old verses of Weiss', however much they may lack finish, never jarred upon one's feelings. On the contrary, they are, as regards their substance, deeply and beautifully conceived, and if now and then a phrase occurs, such as: «Die Erfüllung *fängt sich an*» or *betet an und habet Dank*», it only appeals to us like the innocent words of a child, and recalls sweet memories to us.

Now whether it is an improvement to say: «Von dem Baum des Kreuzes *milde* wehen» instead of «Von des Kreuzbaums Zweigen wehen», or whether the touching verse of the venerable old Weiss:

«Ew'ger, höre Deiner Kinder Stammeln,
Weil ein Kind ja nichts als stammeln kann»,

is better in the new official version, authorised by the government:

«Ew'ger, höre deiner Kinder Stammeln,
Würdig kein Geschöpf dich preisen kann»;

or if the verse:

«Wer kann die hohe Liebe fassen, Und statt der Mörder Schaar zu hassen,
Die bis zum Tode liebt, Noch segnend ihr vergibt»,

reads better when altered in the following way:

«Wer kann die hohe Liebe fassen, Das Güte giebt für alles Hassen,
Die dieses Herz beseelt, Sein Leben für die *Welt*».

I leave to the Reader to decide, but I am convinced that he will be of the opinion as I am that where one has to do with a work, which has proceeded from the soul of the people, and been rendered sacred by venerable tradition, the fewer alterations the better. No government resolution can forcibly bring about a work of art, which is not born of the true feelings of an artist, and thank goodness no reaction has as yet succeeded in forcing upon us an official literary style. But when we agree with the Ammergauers in every way for not having allowed their time-honoured Play to be disfigured by external influences, yet I sincerely wish that they had also retained this conservative spirit in respect to their stage. To see the modern machinist, scene-painter, and property man on the «Passion» stage awakens in me a feeling of unutterable sadness, a sensation as if with all these innovations, the good old «Passion» spirit must pass away. I believe altogether that the Passion Play is so thoroughly based on the ideal, that the intense earnestness of the same will only be diminished by every superfluous decorative or theatrical effect. I must at least confess that in 1880 the Passion Play, on the simple but suitable stage, made such a powerful impression upon me, that theatrical accessories seemed quite unnecessary. But I fully realise that everyone does not share this feeling. Thousands of visitors criticise superficial details, and cannot refrain from finding fault, if the thunder, after the Crucifixion, does not sound quite natural, if any of the stage-machinery fails to act, or if the scenery is not up to the standard of the first-class theatres. You would hardly credit how people criticise and find fault, and how much is expected, and how every stranger, who considers himself exceptionally clever, feels himself also called upon to initiate the Ammergauers into a work so entirely their own. So the world has only itself to thank if it now, instead of the wholesome home-made bread of pure original Ammergau art, has the dainties, provided by the scene-painters from theatres in the big towns, set before it. To admire the works of a Lautenschläger, of a Mettenleitner etc., there is no need to travel to the peaceful village, they are to be found, in large cities, in every better-class theatre. But people have demanded technical arrangements on the «Passage» stage, which the untrained villagers could not carry out, and they have forced the latter to call in outside help so as to meet all the various requirements, certainly at the cost of their historical self-instructive abilities.

The Ammergauers have for a long time held out against external influences. Even now most of the new costumes are made in the village, from drawings by

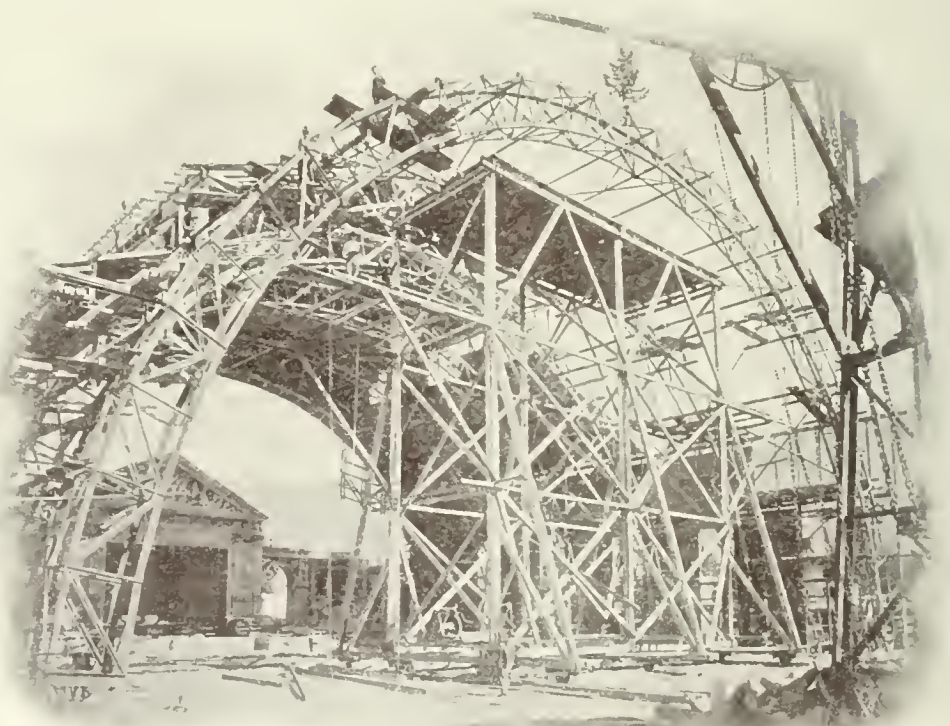


Present Theatre. View of the stage.

by the Ammergauers themselves, but one Munich painter being called in to assist. The growing demands of the public then induced the community of Oberammergau to have the theatre, especially the stage, re-modelled by the *Kgl. Maschinenmeister* Lautenschläger of Munich, and the Viennese scene-painters Burgard & Co. The architecture of the central portion was altered. Unfortunately they neglected to give the gable a better shape, and its triangle, which is too high and rests upon a much too narrow cornice, is not at all in keeping with the style of the old-Roman surroundings, certain details of which, as for example the massive doors, are of real beauty. Fine, open, antique loggias with flights of steps take the place of the narrow balconies; the idea, as well as the design, of this excellent improvement originates, I am glad to say, from an Oberammergauer, the Director Ludwig Lang. The scenery, streets, etc., were constructed from photographs taken in Palestine of the places in question. Mechanical contrivances, such as are in use in modern theatres, have been partially introduced into the peaceful village. I shall now let the interesting description follow of the present theatre with its newly-built hall, which shelters the spectators from the inclemency of the weather, as it reached me from the pen of the constructing engineer, M. Schmucker of Munich. The reader will learn from it all that is worth knowing, and will not think badly of me, if I cannot find it in my heart to become enthusiastic over innovations, which, to me, do not seem at all in keeping with the historical style of old Oberammergau.

«The auditorium has been constructed solely in accordance with practical demands, without employing any particular style of building. In the first place it was necessary to consider that it should afford the audience protection against sun and rain, without endangering too much the character of the Play,

the Director Ludwig Lang, by his sister, the Magdalene of the Play of 1870. Up to the year 1880 too all scenery, mechanical contrivances etc. were manufactured



Hall of the Passion Theatre during construction.

which takes place under the open sky.

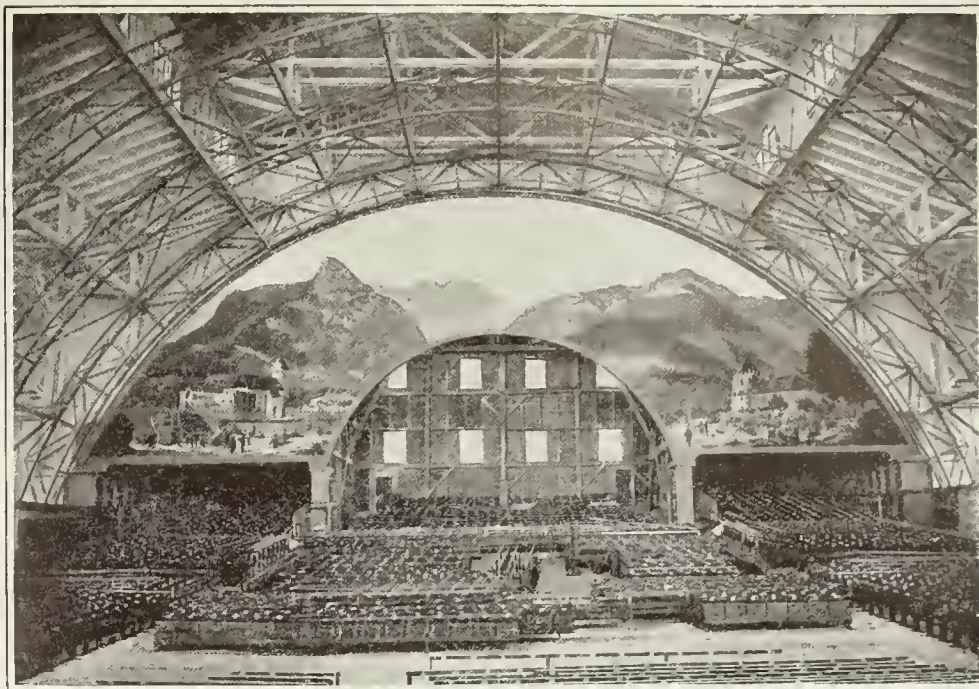
Accordingly, all stage erections, together with the proscenium and the wings, have been left uncovered, and the auditorium opens towards the stage in a huge semi-circular arch, 20 m high and 40 m broad, so that all the spectators can enjoy to the full the natural landscape, which forms the background of the

stage. Also, since both sides of the hall are supplied with five large arched openings, each one 4.7 m high and 2.7 m wide, the mountains on either side of the valley are visible to the audience, and those seated on the upper tiers can also see the plain of the valley with Unterammergau. In windy or rainy weather these openings can be closed in a few seconds by means of large shutters worked by pulleys.

The real supports of the building consist of six iron, semi-circular arches, with a span of 43 m, upon which the wooden roof is erected. In the middle of this latter is a super-structure, which carries thirty fan-lights, so that the interior of the hall is almost as light as out in the open daylight. The entire length of the hall is 48 m, inclusive of the part built on at the back; the breadth between the side walls is 48 m. The height to the ridge of the roof is 27 m. All the exterior walls are stretched over with canvas and painted with oil-colour, for the construction of a hall, built entirely of iron and stone, would have cost in round figures 500 000 marks, which, apart from the great risk for the community in having a building which is only used every ten years for about forty days, would have been too much.

The seats, amounting to more than four thousand, all of which are, without exception, numbered, and from each of which, even the cheapest, a good view is obtained of the central stage and proscenium, can be reached by the visitors through fourteen large double-doors, avoiding as much as possible the use of stairs and corridors. Particular care has been taken that a good view may be had from all seats. In accordance with this, there are no galleries whatever in this hall, all the on-lookers take their places in an amphitheatre, which, seen from the stage, is at first horizontal, and then rises higher and higher, approximately in the form of a parabola, so that the spectators in each row can look over the heads of those in front.

The interior decoration of the hall consists solely of a large picture at the back of the main hall, representing the Passion Play of the year 1634, and the convent of Ettal, near Oberammergau, as it probably appeared in the year 1730. The outside walls of the hall have also only been decorated pictorially. On the



Passion Theatre in Oberammergau.
View of the auditorium from the stage.

outer side of the shutters for the ten large semi-circular openings are painted, on the west side, the four Evangelists with John the Baptist; on the east side, Christ with four apostles. Above these pictures and the two doors of the added part are twelve pictures representing scenes from the Old and New Testaments. The front space in the gable shows the figures of Faith, Hope, and Charity. The back of the hall has, under the gable, a Crucifix carved in wood, one and a half times natural size, with Mary and John painted on either side. Besides this, on the back of the added part five carved-wood figures have been put up, representing Moses with two prophets, and Pilate and Caiaphas.

All plastic figures have been executed by Obcrammergau carvers. All the external pictures, and the large picture in the interior, are by the painter A. Mettenleitner of Munich. The preparing of the plans and the superintendence of the building was in the hands of the engineer M. Schmucker of Munich, to whose data the iron work for the auditorium was designed and constructed by the Munich Iron Works, late Kiessling — C. Moradelli. The weight of the whole structure amounts to about one hundred and twenty tons. The erecting was carried out by means of a movable scaffolding, and was accomplished in the comparatively short time of three and a half months.



Three Heroes

of the Passion Play.

The Passion Play has its heroes and its martyrs; it is difficult to decide where, among its supporters, heroism ceases and martyrdom begins. This blending of tragic heroism has something which puts us in mind of classic times. The poor carver who withdraws at the end of the «Passion», lays aside the purple of the Nazarene or the armour of the Roman, and, whilst the applause of an enthusiastic crowd is still ringing in his ears, returns to the drudgery of every-day life, to the difficulties and hardships of the daily bread-winning, has he not something of the martyr about him? And does not the figure of the lonely Benedictine, Ottmar Weiss, who laments over the place, once the scene of his labours, remind us of Jeremiah lamenting over the ruins of Jerusalem? So great in his resignation, so good in his endeavour to use his vast abilities to the advantage of the small circle which had remained true to him, has he not something of the prophet about him? As Jeremiah sang his immortal lamentations, so he, the exile, sings the holy song of eternal love and eternal suffering, and forgets his own sorrow in the world-redeeming sorrows of the Saviour. If this is not a heroic figure, than which past generations cannot show a better, then I am mistaken in my ideas of true greatness. And then the poor village schoolmaster, his soul full of divine melodies; the modest man in the subordinate position which schoolmasters of those days occupied, every fibre of his soul responsive to art. Although opinions may differ as to the worth of the Passion music composed by him, yet one thing must be admitted, it stands on the level of genuine art. And had the poor inn-keeper's son had the opportunity to further educate himself in Munich, we should perhaps have placed his music among the classic compositions of that time. But he contented himself with devoting the power of his inspired genius to his well-loved birth-place, and in poverty and privation was carried off in his best years by consumption.

Ponder over these fated lives, ye critics, who pay a hurried visit, out of mere curiosity, to see the Passion Play, and then depart, and in the seclusion of your study criticise text and music, and imagine to yourselves you would be able to do it all ever so much better, that you have only just to sit quickly down to write a new Text and new Passion music! Have you ever perhaps heard of the legend, that the builders in times gone by used to mix blood with the mortar so as to make their buildings more lasting? To the cement, which helped to build up the «Passion» work, and which has withstood the ravages of time, has been added heart's-blood. The heart's-blood of poverty — of patient merit, — the heart's blood of unrecognised art-natures, which never obtained their just rights, — the heart's-blood of love for a home which is so poor and so accustomed to privation — for a famishing mother, who can give her child nothing but a piece of bread,

and who is not forsaken by it in spite of that. To those poor art-souls, drooping under the crushing influence of the commonplace, the Saviour had also said: 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden', and they came and



Father Ottmar Weiss. (From an old oil-painting.)

brought Him the first-fruits of their skill, and He received them, and took them into His service. Therefore the right to be an Ammergau, and to take part in the sacred work, must be bought with blood and tears, and woe to him who with careless jest, or the unclean spirit of speculation, would participate in the sacred Play; the structure, which the spirit of their ancestors has so firmly founded, must fall and crush him!

Then again the simple country priest, the venerable old Daisenberger, who renounced his claims to a bishopric and an honourable activity on the stage of politics, in order, like the Roman general Cincinnatus, to cultivate his plot of ground in the hearts of his village compatriots; who contented himself with the humble position of a beneficiary, in order to remain at all costs in his beloved home. Of a truth, the philosophic contentment of the ancients is here united with the humble spirit of christian love.

This trio, Father Ottmar Weiss, the schoolmaster Rochus Dedler, and the priest Daisenberger, are the last and noblest fruits of the old convent culture; it is as if the departing convent-influence wished, on its death-bed, to impart a blessing to its native place, and had bequeathed to it in these three men a legacy full of blessing for generations to come.

I take the biographies of Father Weiss and the schoolmaster Dedler from a work compiled by Dr. Martin v. Deutinger, prebendary of the cathedral in Munich.

They have been written by contemporaries, and are therefore doubly valuable to us. The biography of Ottmar Weiss appeared in Flossmann and Heisler's German *Schulbote* for the year 1844, from page 68 onwards, and I now give, with a few abbreviations, the text of the same:

With Ottmar Weiss the last Conventual of the once famous Benedictine convent of Ettal in Upper-Bavaria has gone to his rest.

Ottmar Weiss was born on the 24th of April 1769, in the village of Bayersoyen, which now belongs to the judicial district of Schongau, but at that time was incorporated with Ammergau in the jurisdiction of the convent of Ettal. At his baptism he received the name of the saint, on whose Day he was born. His parents were poor simple country folk. They were glad that their George, when still in the tender years of boyhood, was admitted as ministrant among the servitors of the convent of Ettal. For since, as long as the convent had existed, no single family had settled in the district of Ettal, the convent selected the ministrant-boys, which were necessary for the service, from the poorer families of the neighbouring villages, and brought them together in their own small institute, where they were boarded and lodged, and received instruction from their superior, the sacristan. After he had received preparatory instruction in Ettal, he came to Munich, and after having worked industriously and made great progress in the schools there, he hastened back to his beloved Ettal, begging that he might be admitted into the convent Brotherhood. As a sign of what they hoped from him, and in whose footsteps he was to tread, the name of Ottmar was given to him when he took his vows, a name which the abbot had borne who had died a few years previously, and who had rendered great services to the convent. Soon after this

he was sent to Ingolstadt to study the higher branches of science. He applied himself with undivided energy to the same; he returned to the convent as Doctor of Philosophy.

On the 19th of September 1795 Ottmar was ordained priest. From henceforth his whole life was zealously devoted partly to the educational, partly to the spiritual welfare of the people.

He obtained a fine field for his religious activity when his abbot, Alphons, sent him as vicar to Eschenloh, a village situated on the Loysach, at the entrance to the mountains. The young priest, vigorous alike in mind and body, was well fitted for guiding the sturdy mountain folk. With wonderful force he proclaimed God's Word in the large and beautiful church; his zeal in hearing confessions and visiting the sick was untiring; he took an affectionate interest in the children, and instructed them not only in religion but also in other subjects. An endearing bond of holy love united the young priest to the community entrusted to him.

Unfortunately however, in 1803, through the dissolution of the convent of Ettal, these intimate ties were also severed. Father Ottmar took sorrowful leave of Eschenloh amidst the copious tears of the parishioners, even rough mountainers giving way to loud laments. The old people of Eschenloh still remember their energetic pastor with sincere and reverent love.

He returned to Ettal to re-inhabit, as *Pensionist*, the convent cell so dear to him, which he had inhabited in happier days. After

the others had become scattered in all directions, it fell to his lot, with a few fellow-brothers, to mourn the ruins of the desolate "Jerusalem". But it was not possible for this man, burning with ardent zeal, to lead an inactive life. As no sphere of work had been assigned to him, he sought one of himself. And he found a most productive one — In the little village of Oberau, the school had hitherto only been carried on by child-loving peasants, or by hired schoolmasters who were engaged for the winter. Father Ottmar resolved to interest himself in the youth of this village. In the year 1804 he took over the school himself, and took up his abode in Oberau in such a manner that Ettal was not entirely deserted by him. For on week-days he remained in Oberau, where he had hired an apartment in a house otherwise uninhabited. On Saturday evenings, or on the eve of feast days, he withdrew to his cell, and Sundays and feast days were devoted to Ettal, from whence, on the following morning he descended the hill and betook himself to his well-loved school.

For nearly three years he carried on the school in Oberau. Then he altered his plan of work in so far, that he opened a school in his cell for boys from Oberau, who came up to him every day to be taught, and also for boys from other places, who could manage to live in Ettal. Among the pupils in this private school of his was also the writer*) of this, who had already been instructed, from the alphabet and onwards, in the village school of Oberau, and soon, encouraged by his teacher, resolved to study, and received from him the preparatory instruction for the entrance into the first class of the *Gymnasium* — During these years though, in which Father Ottmar proved himself to be an excellent teacher and tutor in the village school as well as in his private one, he was by no means inactive in religious matters. He preached most of the sermons on feast days in Ettal; the Lent sermons were also mostly entrusted to him. With what powerful words he represented in the latter the difference between true and false justice, or the Last Judgement of mankind! How he reviled besetting sins! How he enjoined repentance, and a truly Christian life! He was always ready to hear confessions of pilgrims from far and near. He had now also taken upon himself the duties of a sacristan. With the assistance of his schoolboys, he decked his beloved church in festal array in festival

seasons and on all feast days. The church, which had been robbed of all ornaments at the dissolution of the convents, owed the new altar decorations to his efforts. It has been remarked that, as long as Ottmar was in Ettal, the pilgrimages to that place remained in full bloom, but that after his departure they very soon declined.

In those war-like times he had plenty of opportunities of proving useful to the inhabitants of Ettal, who had settled on the lauds of the former convent. And he was at all times ready to lend a helping hand. He was of great service with his fearless courage whenever foreign troops passed through, especially through his knowledge of the French language during the visit of the French, and in the frequent visits of the rebellious Tyrolese in 1809 through the respect with which the latter were filled for this devout man, who still wore always the Benedictine raiment.

To these various occupations of this *Pensionist*, a new one was added in the year 1810, after Herr von Elbling, at that time Postmaster General, later Cabinet Minister, had bought the convent buildings, the brewery, and the farm in Ettal from the government. This latter begged him (for he at once recognised in him the right man) to take upon himself the management of the brewery and farm, and Ottmar directed everything so well, that one could easily see, that if the convent Brotherhood had continued, they would have had in him not only a clever professor but also a capable steward.

Yet his energy was so little exhausted by all this, that he also undertook at the same time a literary work, which in itself made considerable claims upon his time and energy. When namely the idea was started in the neighbouring Oberammergau to again represent, as in by-gone times, the Sufferings of our Lord and Saviour in the so-called Passion Play, Father Ottmar was applied to, with the request that he would re-model the Story of the Sufferings of our Lord, so that they might have a worthy and instructive representation of the same. How he performed the task, is shown by the many favourable criticisms by Catholics and Protestants of the Oberammergau Passion Play, which have appeared in print. It is an acknowledged fact that the sublime subject has been treated with sacred earnestness, with appropriate dignity, and in a style which keeps the attention fixed and arouses devotion and edifying sentiments, and

* Probably J. A. Dai-enberger himself.

that, in particular, the awe-inspiring solemnity of the old Grecian tragedies are to be found again in this Christian tragedy.

But now came the time when he was to be taken from his retirement, spent in such an active manner. After he, among a great number of competitors, had obtained one of the first places in an examination, he was appointed for some time as vicar in Unterammergau, the duties of which office he however for the greater part performed from Ettal. Then on the 9th of July 1812 the curacy of Jesenwang, now situated in the judicial district of Bruck near Fürstenfeld, was graciously conferred upon him.

Perfectly content with his new sphere of life, he desired nothing more, and nothing better. Only one call could have gladly made him leave the curacy, the call back to the convent. A secret longing for his Ettal never entirely forsook him. When the *Ordinariat* of the archbishopric of Munich-Freising put the question to the former members of the Benedictine Order in its diocese, whether they, upon the re-establishment of this Order, would re-enter, the question was also put to the priest of Jesenwang. He answered: "No! if it is a question of entering, *any* convent! But yes! if Ettal is re-established, then I will kiss the threshold of the convent gate with tears of joy."

Although God had blessed Ottmar with robust health and strength, yet he gradually

felt the feebleness and infirmities of old-age approaching. He therefore resigned a few years previously the post of district school-inspector. He was also about to ask for permission to give up the curacy. It was his intention, after resigning the curacy, to still remain in Jesenwang, near his parishioners. A house was to be built for him, in which he intended to devote the rest of his days, retired from the world and all official cares and duties, only to the most important of his own personal affairs, to prepare for death. The materials were already lying in readiness. But the Lord had ordained otherwise. His whole life, spent in the service of the Lord, had been the best preparation for death! Unexpectedly — through an apoplectic seizure — Death knocked at the door, and, after leaving him a short respite for immediate preparation, carried him away on the 26th of January 1843, in his seventy-second year. His body rests, awaiting the Day of Resurrection, in the midst of those to whom he had been a faithful guide on the way to salvation, in word and example. His immortal spirit has gone home — we may comfort ourselves with that thought, when we come to consider his devout life, — to Him, in Whom he believed, Whom he loved, for Whose honour he fought, Whose death of Redemption he glorified with song, to Whose service he devoted his life here upon earth, has passed over to his brethren, and is united with those, to be separated from whom was his greatest sorrow in this world.

Rochus Dedler, Schoolmaster in Oberammergau.

Rochus Dedler was born on the 15th of January 1779 in Oberammergau, where he, the son of an inkeeper, received his preparatory education in the school of the indefatigably active and worthy teacher, Martin Michael Reichard, who had already at that time acquired great renown through his practical instruction in elementary subjects and especially in music, so that many children from distant places were entrusted partly to his teaching partly to his special care.

Since instruction in the elements of music was combined with that in ordinary school subjects, ambitious, well-behaved, and deserving, but poor boys soon found kindly admission into the neighbouring convents of Ettal and Rothenbuch.

In this way Rochus Dedler obtained admittance into Rothenbuch as choir-boy, as his elder brother Franz, afterwards priest in Ober-

föhring near Munich, had obtained his into the seminary of Ettal.

Dedler had, after a short preparatory course in the convent of Rothenbuch, then in the seminary at Munich, obtained free admission as a trained and reliable singer, and distinguished himself as a pupil of this institute by a very praiseworthy behaviour, unflagging industry, principally however by a rare talent for music. If in his earlier years he had, as treble-singer, delighted the congregation with his magnificent and pleasing voice, in his later years, especially in the Passion Plays of Oberammergau, he had won special praise, through his agreeable and powerfully resonant bass-voice, from all music-lovers and even from His Royal Highness the Duke of Leuchtenberg, and other high personages. Dedler was altogether a thorough musician. He played several instruments, was



Rochus Dedler, Schoolmaster in Oberammergau, Composer of the Passion Music.

*J. Dedler &
1812.*

a masterly organist, and was thoroughly versed in reading scores, which was of invaluable service to him in the instruction of the pupils entrusted to his care, and which is all the more sorely missed in the present lack of music-schools, as few schoolmasters have the inclination and chance to acquire knowledge in scoring.

These accomplishments were developed and shown to great advantage in Dedler's musical compositions, which, on the occasion of the entry of His Most Gracious Majesty, King Max Joseph, into the capital in the year 1799, he first attempted, in his twentieth year, as a pupil of the Lyceum in Munich, to bring to public notice, in an operetta, which, though certainly very well received, was not again given in public, so far as is known. But the many masses, litanies, Te Deums, several musical plays, especially the fine songs and choruses in the Passion Play of Ammergau, partly printed and partly written at special request, are speaking proofs and irrefutable testimonies of his deep knowledge of music, of his indefatigable zeal, usually poorly remunerated, and of his devout, gratifying style, which combines art with holy awe, solace, and glowing devotion.

Although Dedler showed a particular preference for music, yet he had by no means neglected to educate himself in other branches of knowledge. He had already finished his philosophical studies and had attained his twentieth year, when he, still undecided as to what profession he should follow, returned to his beloved Rothenbuch, where the still living prebendary, Herkulan Schwaiger, greeted him as a son, and all the convent Brotherhood greeted him as one of themselves.

This warm-hearted reception, reflecting so much honour on the convent, was so gratifying to Dedler, that he promptly formed the intention of remaining always with the Reverend Father, as he called the Prelate, and the brethren, when heavy clouds and storms rose up over the convent, which threatened its speedy dissolution.

Rothenbuch, which seemed to have a presentiment of the danger, was doing its utmost to obtain a permanent and honourable position for its young friend Dedler, when the worthy schoolmaster, choir-conductor, and organist, Martin Reichard died, in the year 1802, in Oberammergau.

The community of Oberammergau, with their worthy pastor, offered this honourable post, out of many applicants, to their young

fellow-countryman Dedler with the assurance that he would receive, besides comfortable and free lodging and the benefit of certain grounds appointed for school and church use, 400 fl. a year in hard cash, paid monthly.

Dedler, who, at that time, never thought of devoting himself to teaching, but who was just considering what his future profession should be, and did not know where to settle, recognised in this call of the community the hand of Providence. He accepted the appointment, and married Josefa, the daughter of the late Hofkammer-Sekretär and Trifft-Beamte, Andreas Sepp of Uffing, on the 22nd of November in the same year, 1802.

Endowed with great intellectual gifts and a kindly nature, the twenty-three-year-old teacher worked quietly and unostentatiously for his profession, far away from all trifling, frivolity, and spiteful intrigue, with manly strength and integrity, with cheerful courage, and glowing zeal for great deeds which could be conducive to public good.

Richly endowed with the noblest blessing, attracted by all that was beautiful and true, and associating himself with them, he scattered, on his short journey through life, many seeds of goodness, saw with quiet happiness their cheerful growth, saw blossoms and splendid fruits, and never wearied in creating and doing, until his continual labours in the school and the church, especially speaking and singing, brought on a disease of the lungs, which showed itself in the year 1821 by repeated spitting of blood. The community of Oberammergau, who well knew how to appreciate the noble, devout, and valuable man, employed all means available to save his dear life. The orders of the doctors, and careful nursing, gave him strength to live through another summer, during which the invalid, according to his express desire, was brought to his brother, the priest of Oberföhring, in order to await there, in a milder climate, his recovery to health, and to rest near his old mother, his brother and sister, after much to l.

Cheerfully the noble-hearted brotherly Samaritan, who had already spent more than 2000 fl. for the education of the teacher's eldest son, used all means in his power to save the beloved brother; but all hopes of saving him were in vain. — Dedler died on the 15th of October 1822, in his brother's arms, expressing the wish that his son Johann, then sixteen years of age, might one day follow in his father's footsteps, support the three unprovided-for children, and take the apostle

St. John as a pattern in his behaviour towards his mother. This wish was realised. Johann Dedler rose to be an excellent schoolmaster, and died as such in Munich on the 15th of November 1850, not more than forty-four years and eleven months old.

Music was the element in which Dedler loved to move and in which he revelled. Every hour out of school-time was spent partly in composing, partly in practising pieces of music. He devoted particular attention to church and school choral music; the generation, which has for the greater part grown up in his school, has made such exceptional progress in German church-music, as well as in instrumental music, that the untiring activity of the Director, and the ability and dexterity of the villagers, deserve unqualified admiration. This warm and warmth-diffusing love for music, combined with this religious feeling and vivid imagination, gave to his surroundings that lively warmth and freshness, that soothing cordiality, and that indescribable charm, which only a higher education can bestow.

Nevertheless his life was not free from

cares and troubles. His first children, the darlings of his heart, died at a period when their minds were just commencing to develop. The inroads of the Tyrolese insurgents in the year 1809, often caused him, as sub-inspector, considerable alarm. — When the neighbouring house caught fire, it soon spread to the new and handsomely built schoolhouse, and caused the schoolmaster a great deal of material damage, and the last illness of this excellent man had completely absorbed the small savings of the sorely tried family.

Frequently tested, but always found worthy, Dedler reached the goal of all things earthly with truly christian resignation, and with a clean conscience. The universal esteem and respect of all good and worthy men accompanied him and his works, and thousands of grateful tears follow him. — His name is written in heaven — and blessed be his memory.

(From the *Wittwen- und Waisenfrende*, Vol. I, page 66—70, and Vol. II, page 138—139.)

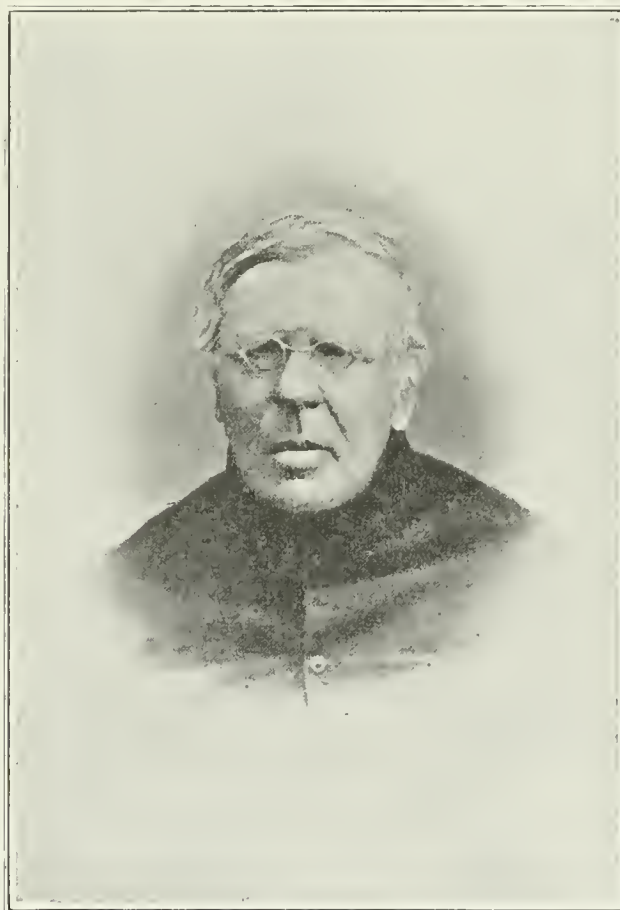
It has been my good fortune to know the aged Daisenberger personally, and therefore I may well reckon myself among his contemporaries, whose duty it is to hand this portrait of a noble man, true priest, and great scholar, down to posterity. I cannot speak of him, without touching on an element, which has played a great part in the developement of the Ammergauers, namely the influence of great, prominent, religious individualities. The Ammergauers are a difficult people to treat with, they have all the peculiarities of artistic natures, the uncommonly fine, sensitive character, the touchy irritability, and a strongly developed egoism, besides the good qualities which always distinguished them.

They are enthusiastic and faithful, and willingly obey their superiors, for they have a strongly marked sense of discipline, but they demand a person whose authority is justified. They require from their priest above all things that he be a *personality* — they demand a dignified bearing, united with a thoroughly cultured mind and a sincere heart, and they demand disinterestedness and tolerance. The Ammergauer has a fine perception for every human foible; biting sarcasm, a sudden outburst of temper, is peculiar to him, and warm hearted and devoted as he is where he has once learnt to respect and love, he is just as implacable, when any one draws down on themselves his hatred or his contempt, even when this contempt is only brought on by trivial superficialities.

It is a remarkable thing, that the vigorous and exceptional artistic individuality of the Ammergau people should have had such an enormous fascination for strong and original characters. We see therefore clergymen and monks of renown play an important part in the history of the community. After the secularisation of the convents, several learned monks removed to Ammergau and lived there peaceably with the community, among whom was the prebendary Herkulan Schwaiger, a great benefactor to the poor, who lived twenty six years on the most

friendly terms with the Ammergauers. Then the good and noble priest, Albin Schwaiger, who was for twenty eight years priest in Oberammergau, and to whose popularity an entry, which an Ammergau man had made in his house-keeping-book, brilliantly testifies. «On the morning of the 21st of June, at about a quarter to ten, the ever-remembered, most highly estimable pastor Albin Schwaiger left here for Rothenbuch, after having been here as pastor for twenty eight years all but a month. There was weeping and wailing at his departure. May God reward him for his faithful and assiduous work as pastor. He was a good and pious man».

There was always a strange relationship between the Ammergauers and their clergy. Each taught the other. The village inhabitants had their own particular prescribed mould, to which the pastor had to adapt himself. A cold-hearted, undignified zealot would have drawn upon himself the anger and hatred of the Ammergauers, whereas a good man, in sympathy with their views, could immensely enoble and advance this contrary people. respect for their pastors.



Geistlicher Rath Daisenberger.

In this difficulty, the president of the community had in the year 1839, when there was a vacancy in the curacy, already thought of a man, who was endeared to the community from childhood, and intimately associated with its interests. This man was Joseph Alois Daisenberger, «a peasant's son of Oberau» as he calls himself, for at that time there was no shame in being a peasant, and the word was held to be an honourable title. This man was born in 1799, and had received his entire education from the excellent Father Ottmar Weiss, who, apart from the

It is therefore easily conceivable that, after the departure of the noble Albin Schwaiger, the parish of Oberammergau seemed perfectly destitute. Such a level as that on which most of the priests of the peasant villages were at that time, did not suffice for them, and like thorough-bred horses, which become shy and restive in a severe and unaccustomed hand, these people here also became restive, vicious, and lost more and more their

subjects necessary for his profession, also made him acquainted with the German classic writers.

Is it not characteristic of the Catholic spirit of then and now, that such a great, pious, and true-believing priest as Father Ottmar Weiss should put into the hands of his pupil, instead of books on the German language, the works of those men, who are now attacked by the narrow-minded laws of a certain set, even the works of such strict Protestants as Gellert and Heinrich von Kleist? And the young scholar of those days has, with his eighty four years of a pure and spotless life, proved that the «shamelessnesses» of the German classic writers have not only done him no harm, but have guided him to a light of faith, to a fount of most noble and christian edification for generations to come. Certainly Daisenberger was never a zealot, he belonged to that mild reconciling tendency, such as prevailed at the beginning of the century, such as shines upon us from the writings of Christoph von Schmidt. He was one of those to whom Charity has at all times appeared as the greatest of the christian virtues, and with deep sorrow he has told us how much he regretted the growing intolerance of a certain sect, and that the one-sided education of the young catholic priests in the seminaries, appeared to him thoroughly unsuitable for practical life. He was just one of those select natures, whose faith is more and more strengthened and deepened by the struggles of life. Like one of those gnarled old oaks he braved storm and tempest. He never timorously went out of the way of any new trend of thought, nor sought to avoid anti-Catholic influences, he strove to become acquainted with them all, and to retain, in spite of all, his convictions and firm faith.

Daisenberger himself never received a one-sided seminary-education. After his first teacher Ottmar Weiss was appointed priest at Jesenwang, he entered the first *Gymnasial* class of the *Holländisches Institut* in Munich, where he formed an intimate friendship with the, afterwards, Cardinal von Reisach, as well as with the brothers Karl and Anselm Feuerbach.

He was awarded with the prize-medal, passed his final examination at the *Gymnasium* in Landshut, and applied for a stipendium, so as to be able to frequent the university in Landshut. As he did not receive the same immediately, he entered for a time the Lyceum at Munich. He there studied philosophy and psychology with Director Weiler, logic, metaphysics, and natural philosophy with Prof. Maillinger, chemistry with Prof. Sieber, mathematics with Hofrath Schöpf, philology and the history of literature with Hofrath Thiersch, and under Hofrath Bayer he devoted himself principally to the study of history, and wrote, under his direction, historical essays. In the summer of 1817 he was attacked by a serious illness, which was the cause of his ultimately making up his mind to become a priest. To this end, he entered the Georgianum in Landshut, and from there attended the university. He took up, besides his theological studies, physics, natural history, the history of philosophy, and the science of agriculture. With pride, Daisenberger still remembered in later years his teacher in homiletics and catechetics, Director Roider, who like no one else understood how to educate young priests, not by a strict exclusiveness, but by a genial and free intercourse, and exchange of ideas with the students of all branches of study. With great delight and humour the old man of eighty years would still relate of his bright and happy student life at the university, where a bond of hearty friendship embraced the students of all confessions.

«We learnt to know what life is, and the views of those of other ways of thinking, and have therefore been able to go through life, and make allowance for these views, but nowadays our young people, who are brought up in seclusion and in a one-sided manner in the seminary, know, when they come out, neither practical life nor tolerance towards those of other confessions, and this brings about the many hard words and misunderstandings, which have given catholic priests a name for being intolerant. I have, up to the present day, counted amongst my friends many Protestants, and found among them most pleasant and estimable men».

Such were almost the exact words of the old gentleman, which he spoke to us in the year 1880, and such was the spirit which guided his every action. His pious and impressionable soul was so to say a prism, which reunited the divided colours of the spectrum, which entered it, into the white ray of light of pure Christian faith. On the 21st of March 1818 he went through his primary ordination, and in 1820 passed the «examen rigorosum» as well as the final university examination. As he had not yet attained the age for the second ordination, he went back again to his home in Oberau, where he interested himself for the children, who hitherto had had a shoemaker from Partenkirchen as teacher, and instructed them in elementary subjects. A papal letter of dispensation brought his permission to receive full ordination, which Felix von Stubenberg in Eichstätt, the sole consecrating bishop in Bavaria at that time, conferred upon him. On the 21st of October 1821 his «Primiz» took place in the open air on the Hill of St. George, in view of the magnificent Wetterstein mountains. His first teacher, Ottmar Weiss, preached the festival sermon in stirring words, before all the people, assembled from far and near, and the devout Rochus Dedler had composed a festival mass on purpose for this eventful occasion, which he performed with the aid of the singers and musicians of Oberammergau. Thus the trio, Ottmar Weiss, Daisenberger, and Dedler, were together on this most solemn and sacred occasion, and one can easily imagine that the sensations, which, with the sound of the dying artist's music, with the thrilling words of his glorious master, passed through the pure, pious soul of the young priest, have remained with him during his whole life of eighty four years. Amidst the sweet tones of Dedler's music, and the blessings of his priestly friend, the young priest was so to say inaugurated with the proper and genuine Passion spirit.

It is true that twenty eight years passed before he was able to play an active part. He first went to Grassau as assistant priest, then to Schlehdorf, and later on to Farchant in the neighbourhood of his birth-place, Oberau. In 1831 he was appointed parish-priest in Uffing, and here he received in the year 1839 a letter from the *Verleger* Lang, with whom he was on intimate terms, who enjoined him to apply for the vacant curacy of Oberammergau, as they well knew his attachment to the village so near his own, and his interest in the Passion Play. The letter, which he wrote in reply is still in existence, and is so characteristic of the strict love of justice of this man, that I cannot forbear from giving it here.

Uffing, Aug. 23rd 1839.

Honoured Friend.

Your esteemed letter of the 20th inst. informs me that Herr Benefiziat Ernst in St. Anton has really applied for the curacy in Oberammergau, and it is therefore certain that Herr Landrichter von Werdenfels has used his powerful influence on his behalf, in Munich. Having been taught by experience what protection can

do, I will not run the risk and disappointment of seeing a younger priest given the preference over me. In addition, I have made it a rule, likewise the result of experience, if ever I should look out for another curacy, only to apply for one that has been publicly notified, and that without other recommendation than the necessary testimonials. If a vacancy in the curacy of Oberammergau is publicly announced (which is then a sign that no particular attention will be paid to any previous petitions), I am at liberty, like anyone else, to apply for it. And in the event of my applying, no one in the neighbourhood, except my clerical and lay superiors, should nor would know of the fact of my soliciting. But I must tell you, dear Friend, frankly and openly, that, after due reflection in God's presence, I have decided to remain there where God has thought fit to place me, and to work according to my feeble powers, as long as I possess the love and confidence of the community entrusted to my care, provided that circumstances are such that I can continue to remain here, and worthily fulfil my professional duties. I own: from my earliest days I had a particular liking for Oberammergau. As a child I looked forward with longing to the Kirchweih of Ammergau; as a young student I passed many happy hours there, and in the early years of my priesthood, it was my fondest wish, as regards the place where my work should be: to become pastor in Oberammergau. The native charm of the Ammerthal, the loveliness of the village, the church, the parsonage, but still more the enlightenment of the inhabitants, their susceptibility for all that is noble and good, their kindly feelings towards me, of which I have received many a proof, all had an extraordinary attraction for me. But after Providence had called me elsewhere, and allotted to me a sphere of action, in which it is possible to work cheerfully, I never gave a thought to other places, but only to my field of labour in this place, which becomes dearer to me year by year, and with whose cultivation I am so happily employed that it is impossible for me to leave it. I ask you, dear Friend, not to take my free-spoken declaration amiss, not to refuse your continued kindness, and to rest assured that I, though absent, feel the deepest interest in the welfare of the community of Oberammergau, and will be particularly pleased if the devout and learned, really kind Herr Ernst, becomes pastor there. I beg you to be assured, that I am, from the depths of my heart

Yours most faithfully

J. Alois Daisenberger,
Pfarrer.

Naturally this letter caused great disappointment in Ammergau, and after the community had waited another six years, they determined to lay the matter before King Ludwig I, and to apply to him for help. I give here the petition in question, which is signed by all the representatives of the community, for it is a striking proof of the Ammergauers' way of thinking, as well as of the good name and high esteem which preceded the priest of their choice.

Most Excellent Majesty
All-powerful King
Most Gracious King and Lord!

In one of the most important matters, the faithful undersigned Parish Council of Your Majesty, ventures with profoundest veneration to proffer a most humble petition for Your Majesty's most gracious inspection.

Since the year 1824 the organised curacy of Oberammergau has been occupied by priests, who have not conscientiously administered to the true welfare of the community entrusted to their care. The sad consequences of this show themselves in the moral corruption of the rising generation during the last twenty one years. Deeply concerned, and urged by the duty to do our best for the community, we most humbly beg Your Majesty, in reference to the present vacancy in our curacy, to most graciously confer the same upon the priest Daisenberger in Uffing, who, born in our neighbourhood at Oberau, is acquainted with our circumstances and requirements, whom we highly value and honour, on account of his excellent qualities, and we are confidently assured that he will prove a blessing to our children as an excellent schoolmaster, to our industries with his artistic sentiments, to our spiritual well-being in word and deed, and will earnestly and worthily support the Passion representations, the next performance of which Your Majesty has most graciously promised to honour with Your Royal presence. With such good qualities, he is certainly the most worthy of all the applicants for this curacy, and we venture all the more therefore, before the Throne of Your Majesty, to renew our petition, already laid before the Government of Upper-Bavaria in the years 1830 and 1839, for the gracious conferment of the curacy of Oberammergau upon the priest Daisenberger, with the confident assurance that Your Most Excellent Majesty, always mindful of diffusing true godliness and a love for the good and beautiful among Your people, will not leave unfulfilled the wish, fostered for so many years, of a true and faithful community. Most humbly begging this most high and gracious favour, we remain,

With profoundest veneration and loyalty

Your Royal Majesty's

*most humble, most faithful, and most dutiful Parish Council
of Oberammergau:*

*Michael Diemer, Vorsteher. Matthias Drexel, Gem.-Pfleger.
Georg Zwink. Sebastian Schaller. Andreas Bierling.*

Oberammergau, May 20th 1845.

The petition was successful, the request was granted, and on the 30th of June the newly chosen priest was already able to inform his friend, the *Verteiger* Lang, of the day of his arrival. This letter too is so significant of this man's character, that I cannot refrain from repeating it here.

Uffing, June 30th 1845.

Most honoured Herr Verteiger.

Most valued Friend.

When I received your esteemed favour, on the afternoon of the day before yesterday, I was not able to answer it immediately, nor even approximately determine the day of my arrival in Oberammergau, for I had not the document until the evening of the day before yesterday.

But now I will not delay meeting your wish, which is a result of your friendly disposition towards me, and informing you that I intend, if no unforeseen hindrances intervene, to leave here on Wednesday July 9th after holy mass, to dine in Oberau at midday, and to arrive in Oberammergau towards evening. I still

have many things to arrange, accounts to settle, farewell-visits to make etc., with all of which however I hope to be finished on the said day. If I have to journey to Munich for my investiture, I shall perhaps employ the first few days after my arrival for that purpose.

Well, — so God has ordained then that I should be appointed shepherd (Seelenhirt) in Oberammergau. I go there fully conscious of my feeble powers and unworthiness, but also full of trust in God's almighty aid.

The deputies from Ammergau, together with the two schoolmasters, have just been to me, and brought me the friendly offer of the community, to send me waggons for the removal of my furniture, and a conveyance for myself, if I would fix upon the day of my departure. I accepted the generous offer with thanks and fixed upon the above-mentioned day.

May God grant me strength and courage to take my leave of this place and to enter upon my new sphere of action! May God bless the parish from which I depart and the parish unto which I go!

Recommending myself to your friendship and kindness, I remain, with sincerest respect

Your faithful friend and pastor

J. A. Daisenberger.

The entry of the new pastor into Oberammergau took place amidst the general rejoicings of the people, and his very first sermon won all hearts. It treated of the duties of a pastor in relation to the community, and of the duties of a christian community. I here give the first part of the sermon:

A priest, and especially the newly appointed priest of a parish, must not hesitate to speak of his own duties to his flock, and to tell them candidly what is due to them from him. A christian people too knows well enough the duties of a priest, they know them from the holy Gospels, from the writings of the Apostles.

I do not hesitate to hold up to myself, in your presence, the picture of a good pastor, although unfortunately I do not see in this picture, what I am, but what I ought to be, and I may conscientiously say, what I wished to be.

O, my beloved brethren, it is indeed a serious thought, deeply affecting for the priest, when he comes to consider it: in the christian pastor we should see a resemblance of Christ on earth. Yes, the good pastor lives as a resemblance of Christ, in love, in precept, and in mode of life. As Jesus Christ, treading this earth in human form, was kindled with love for his Father in Heaven, so the true servant of Christ, the good pastor, is fired by God's love; he is inspired by the purest, most unaffected piety, he is filled with divine sentiment. Prayer, to him, is not a burdensome

duty, but an out-pouring of the heart, and the sweetest happiness of life. The daily offering of the holy sacrifice raises his spirit above the earth, near to the throne of God. In the solitude of his room, or outside in the lonely aisles of Nature's vast and glorious temple, or on the summit of a mountain or hill, the quiet intercourse with God is soothing and gladdening to his soul, a comfort in times of sadness, and a celestial solace amid the toils and troubles of this worldly life. And so, like Moses, who with glowing countenance came down from the mountain of God, he too steps forth from solitude, with divine inspiration, when duty calls him to appear among men; thus he lives on earth a partially heavenly life, made happy in God, a godly life.

As Christ, walking among men on this earth, was all love to mankind, so also is the christian pastor *all love to his fellow men*. He hates only *sin*, never the *sinner*. not even those who are hardened sinners; for even in them he sees traces of God's image, a spark of possible conversion in the future, and he will not extinguish the glimmering wick nor break the bruised reed. He loves even those

that hate him, and blesses those that curse him, his happiness is in returning good for evil. He is a father of the poor in the community, whatever he receives from the church, he does not look upon as official pay, not as his property, but rather as an inheritance of the poor, and himself as God's steward over property of the poor. He is the refuge, the protector, of the widows and orphans of the community, a comforter to the unfortunate and sorrowful, a sympathising friend to the sick and dying, to whom he is ever ready to show deeds of kindness at all hours of the day and night. He mourns with the sorrowful, and rejoices with those that are glad at heart. To those entrusted to his care he never denies innocent pleasures; he even takes part in them himself, he tastes them, though he does not absorb himself in them, and only then to heighten and ennoble the happiness of his parishioners by participating in the same. *Living himself at peace with the whole world,* it is his most earnest endeavour to *make peace between those at variance* with each other, to reconcile enemies, and everywhere to promote love and concord about him. In all this he is no weak Eli, he earnestly warns the wicked, to the oppressor he is a resisting rock, a terror to the seducer, a thorn in the side to all that are wicked, an energetic enthusiast for the honour of God's house, and an undaunted upholder of religion. Thus he strives to be something to everybody. And if he is powerless to do anything more for his parishioners, he is still able to pray for them. A prayer for his flock is a weapon both offensive and defensive, in which he places the utmost confidence, with which he overcomes everything. He bears the concerns of all in the community in his fatherly heart, and daily lays them before his God and Master. He prays for the good, that God may preserve them, for the weak, that God may give them strength, for the wicked, that God may convert them, for those led astray, that God may bring them back, for the sick and unfortunate, that God may send them aid and comfort from Heaven, for the dying, that God may take them to Him, for the dead, that God may grant them eternal bliss. This priestly inter-

cession is a daily burnt-offering, which rises to Heaven from the depth of his heart, and goes hand in hand with his planting and tending, and makes the same really effectual, for it is not he that plants, nor he that tends, but God alone, that gives the increase.

The good christian pastor is a resemblance of Christ in doctrine also, what Christ once taught on earth, and verified as divine truth with numberless miracles, this and nothing but this he teaches. No mere fiction does he put before his people, but the pure word of God, as the Lord has proclaimed it, as the Apostles have recorded it in the Holy Scriptures, as the ecclesiastic tradition of the holy Fathers has handed it down to us. All his teachings are nothing other than an explanation, an application, and an inculcation of the manifestations and precepts of the doctrine of Jesus.

Finally the good christian pastor is a resemblance of Christ on earth in his outward life.

Learn of me, said Christ for I am meek and lowly in heart, and he could say to his adversaries: who among you can accuse me of sin? So too the servant of Christ walks meek and lowly upon earth, and is therefore sober and discreet in his demeanour, quiet and affable in his intercourse, modest in conversation, simple in dress, temperate in eating and drinking, satisfied with little, chaste and blameless in the necessary intercourse with people of the opposite sex, and not only shunning an impure life, but all suspicion of an impure life. And there, my dear brethren, you have the picture of a christian pastor as he ought to be. He lives in Christ's image on earth — in love, in precept, and in mode of life. So, beloved, so I too should walk amongst you in Christ's image. But alas! I must own: (I still fall very far short of this description of a good pastor. Bearing in mind however that God has not sent you an angel but a feeble man as your pastor, have patience with my faults and weaknesses. I hope to conquer the same more and more, through your intercessions to God and with God's help. —

What the new pastor here said, he has kept to, in his thirty eight years of work in the parish. A better picture of him as pastor could not be given than by quoting these his own words.

In love, precept, and mode of life, he proved fully worthy of the community's confidence. Under him the good old pious Ammergau spirit again revived.

Already the Passion performance of the year 1850, conducted by him, was recognised by Eduard Devrient as being exemplary, and it ensured the world-wide fame of the Passion Play. But of more value than the artistic taste, with which he conducted the representations of the Passion, was the manner, in which he, as pastor, trained his flock, in which he raised the minds of the players to the necessary earnestness and pious enthusiasm, which gave the Play more the character of divine service. I give here extracts from a sermon which he held at Whitsuntide, before the beginning of the Passion Play, in which he prepares the community for their great office. The commencement treats of the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost, and he continues: —

O may the Spirit, proceeding from the Father and from Christ, the Spirit of Light and Power, which lived and worked henceforth from *that* Whitsuntide, in the disciples of the Lord, also fill us all. May it strengthen this whole community, not only in living faith in Jesus and His divine teachings, and in true love for the most lovable and divine Friend, but also enlighten and strengthen them to glorify far and wide the name of Jesus the Crucified One, and to spurn on to new zeal the faith in Him, and love for Him, of thousands of their fellow-men.

O dear friends! Our community has, this year, beginning with to-morrow, to fulfil a great and sacred calling. They have to a certain extent to take part in the apostolic duties

The Apostles went out, after that Whitsuntide, among mankind, and preached to them of Jesus the Crucified One, proclaimed to them His teachings, His deeds, His sufferings and death. His resurrection and glorification, showed them that in Him the prophecies of the prophets of old, in Him the prototypes of the Old Testament, have reached fulfilment, brought home to them, that salvation is to be found in Him and no other.

It is true that we shall not go out into the world to proclaim the name of the Crucified One. But thousands will come to us in the course of this summer, pious and indifferent ones, believers and unbelievers. And it is for us to represent, visibly and audibly, a living repetition of what the apostles preached, to these thousands from far and near: the most sacred doctrines of the divine Teacher, the most sublime example of His love, His bitter suffering, His death of sacrifice for mankind, His glorious victory over death and Hell, the prophecies and types of the Old Testament verified in Him. If the community works together with holy zeal for a worthy performance, a great blessing may, with God's grace, proceed from this community.

How many pious Christians will not return to their homes from here, moved by the living reminder of our Saviour's death, strengthened in their faith in Him, fortified anew in their love for Him, and with new resolutions to remain His faithful disciples!

How many, even indifferent and thoughtless ones, will be able to resist being seriously impressed with what they see and hear, and perhaps this impression will become in them a seed of zealous christian life!

But dear friends, God's pleasure and blessing will only accompany our work, if we undertake it in a sacred spirit and with holy enthusiasm.

Ah! if selfish motives, if vain seeking after glory and greed of gain only, were to guide us, there would be no blessing in it; then God would look down upon it with displeasure; it would be an abuse, wicked and culpable, a defamation of the most sacred; then we should deserve to reap, instead of glory, the most bitter censure, instead of gain, a grievous loss

Our departed forefathers made a vow to the Almighty, in times of sore tribulation, to perform the Passion, with the pious intent to thereby promote the glory of God, the memory of the blessed Redeemer, who has given His life for us, and their own edification and that of their fellow men. With this pious intention, and *with this alone*, can we too this year, fulfil the vow of our ancestors. Let us have this end alone in view! Whether those, who seek in the Passion performances ought else besides christian teaching, praise or blame us, should be to us a matter of total indifference. If we ourselves and many of our fellow men depart from thence, moved, edified, strengthened anew in christian faith, then that is accomplished which was to be accomplished. Let therefore the sole desire of each one be, not to shine in the art of acting, to desire which, would only be ridiculous arrogance on the part of a simple country people, but to con-

tribute as much as possible towards a living and worthy representation of the sacred story for the people assembled.

Therefore let us carry out with sacred zeal that which we began with sacred intentions.

Every one who has to join in the work, in whatever manner, is a necessary link in the chain; let him endeavour to fulfil that which is put upon him to the best of his abilities, and thus contribute to the worthy performance of the whole.

You who have only mechanical tasks to perform, do them with diligence and accurate attention; you have, although unseen by man, a great share in the work, before God, as much as he who performs an important part in the Play itself.

You who have to represent persons who hated and persecuted the most Beloved, the most Holy One, represent them in their entire wickedness, odiousness, and hypocrisy, so that horror at such shameful conduct must seize every beholder. With that you will help to cause the innocence, the gentleness, the sublime dignity of the Redeemer to appear in all the brighter light. The light in a picture is only properly brought out by the shadows.

You who have to represent the disciples of the Lord, the friends and relations of Jesus, let your whole conduct be one of love and respect towards the Divine Master, riveted attention to His every word, intense interest

in the foretelling of coming events, deepest sorrow at His sufferings, brotherly love and kindness among yourselves. In you, round about your Lord and Master, should be seen a gathering of the best of men, the most glorious pattern for all christian communities.

And thus let everyone work with sacred zeal, so that all the various components of our work, plot, scenic arrangements, instructive dialogue, music and singing, may blend in one harmonious whole, full of beauty and sublimeness, and so that the general impression of the Play may be, for every spectator, who comes with a sincere heart, elevating, edifying, and furthering to the religious sense.

Therefore let that, which we undertake, be a truly sacred work, pleasing to God and rich in blessings. May the representation bring about, in the hearts of the people present, something of that, which the holy apostles, after the sending down of the Holy Ghost, effected in the hearts of their hearers, by proclaiming the Holy Story — eye-witnesses of which they themselves had been.

But as, once upon a time, the apostles influenced mankind, not only through their words, but by their devout lives, so we too must not only make a worthy representation of the most sacred subject on the stage our aim and endeavour, but likewise, 'apart from that, show by a Christ-like and moral behaviour, that in the first place the memory of the death of our Lord and Saviour has made a most salutary impression.

He goes on to say how that the villagers should make themselves worthy of this holy work, by their life, by pious and moral conduct, and closes with the words: —

Therefore to-day let us, on the day of the sending of the Holy Ghost, pray fervently to Heaven for help from the Divine spirit in this work that we have in hand.

May then the Holy Ghost to-day pour out

a rich measure of its grace upon this community as once over the disciples assembled in the room at Jerusalem.

May it abide and bear fruit in the same.
Amen.

It is easy to imagine what effect such sermons had upon the congregation, the more so as Daisenberger was no high-flown extravagant orator. He spoke slowly, weighing each word, his whole manner was exceptionally calm, and had therefore all the more influence upon restless people. He was through and through of a practical nature, he showed his christianity more in practical life than in words, and he knew, as few do, how to say the right word at the right moment. He was also once elected in the *Landtag* in the year 1849, but political party-struggles were not according to his taste; all that was strife, contention, fighting, his meek soul could not bear. And yet he was a fighter in the cause of faith, better than the greatest champions of the political arena — but his weapon was Love, and his impenetrable armour was his blameless, peaceful, truly christian

mode of life. This one man, with his great and godly personality, which so thoroughly bore out the words: «by their fruits shall ye know them», has done more for the good of the Catholic religion than the narrow-minded laws of the church militant, which were only won by fighting. He was a living proof that christianity can be furthered only by peaceful means, only by the weapons of the mind. And how well he knew how to mix with the people. In his intercourse with the poorest he had always a friendly word, a cheery jest. He spoke their dialect, and lent a willing ear to all their concerns, but yet he always maintained his dignity. He was a man who inspired such esteem, that, with all familiarity, no one in the parish was ever disrespectful to him. But he could also appreciate the wish and humour of the people, and could laugh heartily, when, in the school one fête-day, to his admonishing reproof: «*Ös seid's Buabn, ös könnt's wieder amal gar nix — da geh i scho zu die Madln nüber, die san mer lieber*», a saucy boy answered: «*Mir oo, Herr geistle Rat*». Or when the poor woman with many children, whose marriage he had consecrated at the same time as that of another couple, who had remained childless, made to his sympathetic question: «*Nun wie geht's Kathrin'?*» the reproachful answer: «*O Herr geistle Rat, wo habt's jetzt oo alle Sege bei der Trauung über mi ausgossa und über die andre gar koan*».

But you must not for a moment think that his intercourse with his parishioners did not rise above the level of dull common-places. For his parish, he began his historical studies, he wrote the excellent history of the village of Oberammergau, which was incorporated in the Upper-Bavarian archives, and still bears witness of his brilliant abilities as an historian. This historical work was, as he writes in the preface, read to individual members of the community from copies, and then principally to pupils of the school which was held on fête-days. As he distributed his whole income among the poor and needy, so that often he had not a single penny left in his pocket, he also distributed his spiritual treasures among his parishioners. He endeavoured to improve them in every way, and to arouse a taste in them for ennobling pleasures. Later, when eighty years old, he again edited an historical, topographical description of the Parish of Oberammergau, which, excellently and clearly written, contributed much towards making this noteworthy place known.

Very fine is his preface to the same, the closing words of which I give here.

Thus I give then a description of the place, to which I was lovingly attached from childhood, and to which I am, in my old age, attached with equal affection, into the hands of my young friends, the publishers; that they may see to the publication of the same as they think fit. And when they have published it, may people of the place, and strangers, read the modest work with profit and pleasure.

May the strangers who come here to the sacred Play become, through reading it, better acquainted and more intimate with Ammergau, and may they sometimes, when they have returned to their homes, revive their recollections of this peaceful mountain valley.

But you, dear community and parishioners, may you, by reading it, be newly fortified in

the faithful adherence to your home, and in the resolve carefully to ward off everything that might tend to harm or dishonour the same, always to faithfully co-operate in everything, which might promote Ammergau's prosperity and good name, maintain harmony and concord among the inhabitants, and develop true christian piety and morality, so that they bear ever finer flowers and fruit.

And may you regard this present description as a spiritual bequest of the author, your old friend, teacher, and pastor, and keep him in fond remembrance after his death.

Oberammergau, on the last day of the year 1879.

J. A. Daisenberger.

But he also took great pleasure in instructing the young. He held a bible-class for week-day scholars in the parsonage. There he sat among them as a father surrounded by his children, teaching and admonishing, praising and punishing, and he sought to arouse in their hearts a true feeling of christianity. He also gave private tuition to young students, and many a young man owes a high position in life to his training. He devoted particular attention to church matters, he introduced singing among the congregation and a number of excellent practices, which unfortunately have been neglected by his successors. He compiled a little book of Church Service for the community, in a word, all his aims and endeavours were directed towards a fitting and noble worship of the Divine.

He also did a great deal for the so-called *Uebungstheater* (practice plays). He wrote new words to the «*Kreuzesschule*», a kind of miniature Passion Play, which was formerly, now and again, performed in the intervals between the Passion Plays. The representation, which took place under his direction, is said to have been exceptionally fine. But Daisenberger also wrote other dramas, which were then performed in the training theatre. They are all conspicuous for healthy patriotic sentiment, keen enthusiasm, and spirited poetic language. «*Theodolinde, drei folgenschwere Tage für Baiern*», «*Otto von Wittelsbach*», «*Kaiser Ludwig der Baier*» or «*die Stiftung des Klosters Ettal*» are pieces which deal with historical events of the country. Besides the already mentioned *Kreuzesschule*, religious subjects are dealt with in «*der ägyptische Joseph*», «*Naboth*», «*Judith*», «*Genoveva*», «*Elisabeth, Landgräfin von Thüringen*», and «*Agatha, die Heldin von Katania*». Besides these there exists a very fine Passion Text by him, which unfortunately cannot be performed theatrically, in iambic verse of five feet, in which the Greek chorus-*motif* in antique strophe and antistrophe are particularly emphasised, as also a translation of the «*Antigone*» of Sophocles. The first stanza of the chorus in this Passion Text, in antique metre, has been introduced into this year's Passion Play, so that the Prologue can commence from the very beginning, for the prologue proper really is recitative. When we come to consider what this man has accomplished, who filled his post of pastor so fully and adequately, even after he had renounced all claims to the curacy and restricted himself to the *Frühmessbeneficium*, we cannot but evince profound respect for this country priest, who every day read a chapter out of the Bible in seven languages, also Calderon and Dante, Shakespeare and the French poets, in the original, and at the same time wrote poetry on his own account and historical essays of no mean worth. Although he was modesty itself, his real worth, his sterling character could not remain concealed. In 1862 King Max conferred upon him the title of *geistlicher Rath*, later on he was offered a position as a canon in the Cathedral at Munich, and his friends foretold that the next step would be a bishopric, — he declined, — he sought no other crown than that of life eternal. In 1871 he celebrated his fifty year jubilee as priest, and received on this occasion the Cross of Honour of the Ludwig Order from King Ludwig II. — Henceforth his whole life was devoted to preparing himself for eternity. The following touching little poem, which he wrote down in the year 1876, after a serious illness, bears witness of his resignation to the Divine Will:

*Mein Gott Dir hab' ich mich ergeben;
Was Du willst, das gesch'eh' an mir!
Willst Du, ich soll noch länger leben*

*In diesem Erdenhale hier —
Mir ist es recht, — ich danke Dir.
Und nimmst Du dieses ird'sche Leben
Schon bald, recht bald zurück von mir —
Mit Freuden sei es hingegeben,
Du gibst ein bessres mir dafür!
Mir ist es recht — ich danke Dir! —*

The schoolmaster Feldigl has set these lines to most appropriate music, and made an effective and touching song.

In the year 1880 it was our privilege to visit the aged priest in the garden of his home, which he shared at that time with his nephew, the sacristan Sebastian Lang (the Caiaphas of the present Passion Play). There he sat under the tall old trees, with a pile of books in front of him, an infirm old man bowed down by illness, but from the powerful head, reminding one somewhat of Grillparzer, shone out the full strength and beauty of this great, free, and unbroken soul. Anyone, who has once seen the old gentleman, will never forget his interestingly rugged and weather-beaten appearance, with his bushy eyebrows, and face, which looked like that of a wild man of the woods. But how wonderfully fascinating this face was, with the broad forehead, the bright intelligent eyes, the lively expression, the mouth coarse, but suggestive of such good nature, and with a touch of humour too. His whole being bore the stamp of such an exceptional personality, and was so much above the ordinary run of mankind, that one could scarcely resist its magic influence. His conversation too, all his words, were natural, simple, but full of intellect and deeply thought out, and everything he said gave the impression of absolute truth, of manly conviction and faith.

On the 20th of April 1883 he passed quietly away, and on the 23rd they bore his mortal remains to the grave in the peaceful little cemetery of Ammergau. The following are the words, which the mayor, *Herr Lang*, spoke at his grave in the name of the sorrowing community, — they express so truly his connection with those left behind, those who had lost in him their spiritual father.

«Thou canst rightly expect, O dear departed one, that I, in the name of the whole parish of Oberammergau, which stands deeply mourning, as never before, around thy grave, will honour thy memory with a word of farewell, of love, and of thanks.

Yes, of farewell — thou hast been so long with and amongst us, by God's grace so long that we finally did not dare to say, the hour must sometime come when we should lose thee. — And now it has come; we have lost thee. And what have we not lost with thee! A priest and pastor who has fulfilled his sacred office so faithfully, so modestly and piously, so humbly and conscientiously, in a manner rarely to be met with; an eloquent preacher of God's word; an earnest and yet kind and gentle teacher of our children; a warm friend and adviser to every member of the community in all their family concerns, with a sympathising heart for all their joys and sorrows. Like a patriarch, who has seen generations come and go, thou hast walked amongst us, who, when he could no longer pursue his vocation, appointed him by God, in the old accustomed manner and with the old vigour, was still able to do and has done one thing — loved us, and prayed for us.

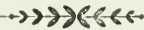
But not only our Oberammergau, to whom he has dedicated so unselfishly and devotedly, nearly thirty eight years of his life, mourns to-day at his grave; far out in the world the news of his death will be received with sorrow, for many, yes, thousands know what our Passion Play owes to him, how he, by having, with all due respect for what had been handed down, struck out with a sure hand everything in the Text no longer suitable, has made it possible that in our time too we could remain true to the heritage of our fathers.

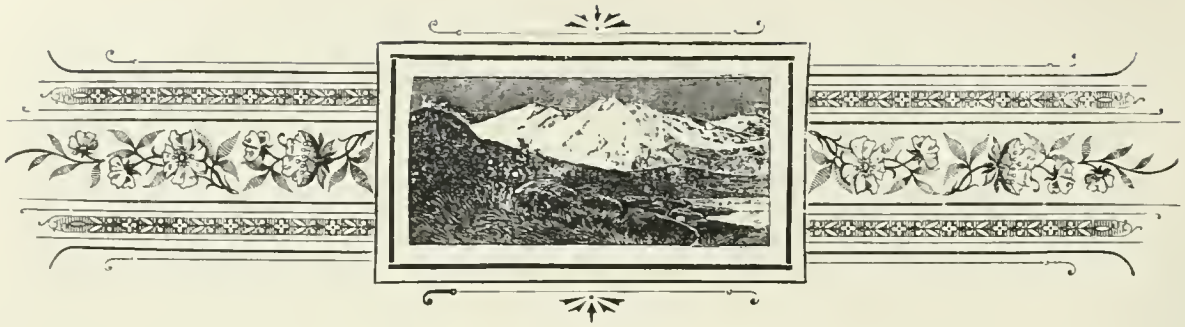
When we prepare for the sacred Play the next time, thou, dear departed one, wilt no longer be able to come to our aid in word, deed, and counsel. A better and happier lot has befallen thee. Thou seest the Redeemer in His heavenly glory, Whose Cross thou hast so faithfully and believingly borne here below, and hast heard from His mouth the blessed words: Thou good and faithful servant enter thou into the joy of thy Lord».

Mayst thou be rewarded for what thou hast done for us, for us who now leave thy grave with the solemn vow, never to forget thee until we may follow thee into a better world.»

It is seldom that the intellectual influence of a man maintains its force so long after his death, as in the case of Daisenberger. The brilliant quintessence of his mighty personality continues to shine forth upon the Ammergauers, as the light of expired planets still illumines our earth long after their dust has been scattered into infinite space.

How long will the light of sacred enthusiasm, which he has kindled in his sphere, still continue to shine? The flame of religious feeling is still glowing, which alone can make the sacred Play endure. Old, faithful Ekkehard of the Passion village, spirit of him who has gone to his rest, pray that one, like thee, may be sent to thy forsaken flock, so that the sacred fire may not die out — that the darkness of indifference and unbelief may not envelop the last glow of faith.





The Music of the Passion Play.

The *text* of the Oberammergau Passion Play has always been a subject for learned treatises, and great historical interest has been evidenced for it from all quarters, whereas the *music* by the schoolmaster, Rochus Dedler, never found a just nor artistic appreciation. It has remained a matter of controversy up to the present day, praised up to the skies as an immortal master-piece by some, by others condemned as worthless and old-fashioned, and again by others patronisingly smiled at as a naive piece of peasant music.

Propositions of all kinds were made to the Ammergauers, and *new* «better» Passion music was offered to them, without the value of the *old* having been enquired into. Especially in 1880, when the composer Cyrill Kistler made a great commotion, and in a long article endeavoured, with the aid of mostly incorrect extracts from the music, to prove the inferiority of Dedler's music. His deductions deserve as little consideration as the exaggerated praise of Herr von Melchthal. W. Wyl, who altogether wrongly looks at the Passion Play in the light of a simple «peasant-play», also represents the music as being a harmless provincial production. Then he says: «the old-fashioned music of Rochus Dedler is feeble, it is written in a style adapted to the capabilities of the village musicians»; and so on. I differ entirely from this. Firstly the music is not old-fashioned, secondly it is not feeble, and thirdly it makes demands upon the performers, which they are not always able to meet. This is by no means a depreciative criticism of the Ammergau singers and musicians, on the contrary, the people do wonders. But what I mean is, that Dedler's music is not written to suit the standard of ordinary village music, and that it contains technical difficulties, the rendering of which does not please the ear of a musician, in spite of all allowances. But what does that amount to? Supposing a noted conductor were to come and perform the *Finale* of the *Ninth Symphony*, in the open air, with two dozen village singers and an insufficient orchestra — it is more than likely that a great deal of unfavourable criticism would be forthcoming.

This is just what all those clever people, who are so ready with good advice, never consider — the circumstances of the performance require music

which is effective even if not rendered by first-rate musicians, and Dedler's music does this, at anyrate more than any of the proposed substitutes.

After twenty years *Cyrril Kistler* has now been fairly well enlightened by the present conductor of the Passion music, the teacher *Herr Ferdinand Feldigl* in his pamphlet: *Die Oberammergauer Passionsmusik. Führer durch dieselbe, zugleich Entgegnung auf die Broschüre: «Das Passionsspiel in Oberammergau von Cyrril Kistler», Verlag von Carl Aug. Seyfried & Comp., München.*

Everyone, versed in music, will read with enjoyment this treatise testifying to such an eminent knowledge of music and clever reasoning; it is too by far the most important work ever written upon the Dedler music. The author wards off with convincing proofs all attacks upon its rights of existence. He proves to us that neither the Cecilian, nor the Bach forms of compositions, nor even those adapted to modern tastes, would be suitable as substitutes.

Moreover, if we wish to critically review Dedler's music, we must first of all consider, that nowadays it is almost impossible to exactly determine in detail which settings are Dedler's and which are not. Dedler's original score, which alone could give us information, has in some unaccountable manner strayed over to England. It is a mystery who the *Judas* was, who, for base coin, betrayed and delivered up the sacred property. At all events the curse of the whole community will rest upon the traitor as long as the Passion Play and its beautiful music exist.

It is only now that the full extent of this bitter loss becomes clear, for the true greatness of Dedler's genius is but just beginning to be appreciated. Nobody could render Ammergau a better service, than he, who succeeded in bringing back the original score, or at least a copy of it.

Since Dedler's death every conductor has undertaken, what seemed to him, suitable alterations; this would have been in itself perfectly harmless if the original had been preserved for reference. But this has disappeared, and only two copies are in our possession, which the teacher *Guziel* copied in the year 1869 from an already altered Dedler score, and which in their turn are so pasted over, scribbled on, rubbed away, and washed out by the rain, that a new copy had to be written for 1900. This latter consists of the score as re-written by F. Feldigl and Ed. Lang. It is only to be hoped that Guziel's manuscripts will be jealously guarded, so that they do not share the same sad fate as the original.

The question now arises: What is there really in Dedler's music? Who is right among the many who have so warmly discussed it? A brief answer is difficult. Two facts are certain in regard to Dedler's composition:

Firstly it is nobly conceived throughout, and in many parts of high artistic value; Secondly it is so suited to the Ammergau Passion Play, that no better solution of the question is imaginable.

The most striking proof of this was the pitiable failure of an attempt in 1890 to insert the Burial Chorus by *Max Zenger*, in itself quite a good composition, but which sounded dull and empty, when heard along with the fresh, breezy strains of Dedler's music. An attempt with a «classical» Passion music in the style of J. S. Bach would turn out still worse, but a composition in the style of a modern composer of programme-music would be simply impossible.

Rochus Dedler wrote the first Passion music for the Play in the year 1811 thoroughly revised his work for 1815 however, as Father Ottmar Weiss had altered his text. On the occasion of this revision for 1815 the beautiful introduction and entrance-chorus were composed. For 1820 Dedler composed some new choruses and received for the same 14 fl. 40 kr., whilst he received a fee of 53 fl. 41 kr. for the principal work, for which he also wrote the vocal score. In the year 1820 Dedler himself sang the prologue. His last composition was a mass, which he himself (21. Oct. 1821) directed at the Primiz of Alois Daisenberger, the subsequent pastor of Oberammergau. On the 15th of October 1822 the great, yet modest master died.

Already in the year 1830, mention is made in the preface of the Text-book of alterations in the music, and this is repeated at every Play; every conductor re-inserted what his predecessor had crossed out; then, when certain abridgements were deemed necessary, whole parts disappeared. In 1869 the military bandmaster, C. Hünin, re-wrote the score for the wind instruments and made also other alterations, and then the original score vanished! How much beautiful music was lost in this way, it is difficult to determine. All we can do is to be thankful for what remains to us, and this is a rich treasure, for Dedler did not write, like the average composer of to-day, a whole book upon *one* good idea, but a whole book full of good ideas, as Feldigl once happily remarked.

Already in the first part there are three gems of the Passion music. Whilst the overture, in spite of a noble *motif* and perfect construction, is not in every respect satisfactory, the moving recitative of the Prologue with the following incomparably beautiful passage: "*Doch von Ferne von Calvaria's Höhen*" (Yet from afar, from Calvary's Height), has a deep effect upon everyone.

The second noteworthy passage is the touchingly conceived duet for Tenor and Bass: "*Ew'ger höre Deiner Kinder Stimmeln*" (Eternal One hear Thy children's faltering cry; unfortunately the last eight or twelve characteristic bars have fallen victims to the pitiless "blue pencil").

Then the entrance chorus of the People of Israel is probably the finest thing in the whole Passion music, and is even acknowledged by the most inveterate opponents of Dedler.*

In Part III the soprano solo: "*Wo ist er hin*" (Whither has he gone) deserves further recognition especially on account of the magnificent counter-passages for the first violins.

Every number shows a superabundance of beautiful melodies, as the solo passage "*Gut ist der Herr*" (The Lord is gracious), or the alto solo "*Was biele! für den Knaben ihr*" (What

will ye offer for the lad); peculiarly effective is the song of the spirits from the rocks of tiiboon: "*Flieht, Wanderer*" (Fly, Wanderers).

Especially worthy of notice are the passages: "*Seht, welch ein Mensch*" (Behold the man), *Abraham, töl ihn nicht* (Abraham, slay him not); the magnificent choruses in No. XI and XII, and the simple, sublime chorus "*Ihr alle, die ihr hier vorübergehet*" (All ye who pass by here).

Of excellent dramatic effect is the alternating singing of the choir with the people behind the stage, in No. XIV.

A Beethoven would not have been ashamed to have been the composer of No. XV, so finished is its beauty and so masterly its instrumentation.

No. XIV has only been in existence since 1840, and is made up of Dedler compositions. The singers here appear in black mantles (not, as Feldigl wrongly writes, in No. XV). With touching expression Jos. Mayr, the recent "Christ" recites the melodrama: "*Auf fromme Seelen!*" (Up, pious souls!). The number closes with a pretty chorus *a capella*.

The last number is an animated, stirring resurrection chorus with a dignified *andante* passage (soprano and alto solo), and finishes up with a jubilant, exultant *finale*.

* The Text and music revisers seem to have been particularly concerned about this charming passage, for instead of the true words: "*Weil ein Kind ja nichts als Stimmeln kann*", which Ottmar Weiss introduced as a last improvement into his own vocal text instead of the former wording, and which pleased Daisenberger so much that he never altered it, someone, who thinks he understands the matter better than Weiss or Daisenberger, has again inserted for 1900 the original words which the poet himself had rejected.

Lehrer Ferdinand Feldigl has produced a master-piece in his revision of the Passion music. The idea of improving Dedler through Dedler is as loyal as it is generous, and does great honour to the reformer, who, as a skilful composer, could have handled the subject more easily if he had used only his own resources.

Wherever an alteration seemed to him advisable, extracts were made from the rich store of Dedler's church-music, and in this manner a complete number (the *Grabmusik*) was compiled. Many an 'improvement' made during the last ten

to twenty years
by less skilful

hands was

struck out again,
and the original
setting adopted.

A step further

in the right
direction is a
musically more
correct method
in conducting.

Much mischief
was done, in
the belief that,
by changing to
slow time cer-
tain passages,
which had been
objected to on
the ground that
they were old-

fashioned, they
would be more
effective; thus



Eduard Lang, Music-director in Oberammergau
and Sub-conductor of the Passion music.



Ferdinand Feldigl,
Conductor of the Passion music and Teacher
in Oberammergau.

the Hallelujah chorus, overflowing with divine enthusiasm, was brought down to nothing more nor less than a mazurka, and the consequence was that it produced a jarring effect. We notice with pleasure this year a fresher tone in it again, quite in the spirit of the immortal Dedler.

What Feldigl is in a theoretical way, Eduard Lang is in a practical way. The latter, a true Ammergauer of the old stock, for many years conductor of the orchestra and of the *türkische Musik*, likewise sub-conductor of the Passion orchestra for 1900, has done his full share in the difficult work. He has arranged the wind instruments more equally, written with his own hand a new score and all the orchestra-parts, and above all trained a large number of capable young forces, of which unfortunately two of the best — his own son, Leo, and Dominikus Schilcher — have died in their prime. The choir for 1900 is composed of 20 female voices and 15 male voices; the orchestra consists of: 6 first violins, 9 second violins, 6 violas, 1 'cello, 3 double basses, 2 flutes, 2 clarionets, 3 trumpets, 2 horns, 1 trombone and a kettle-drum. Several of the best musicians have to take part in the singing, others on the other hand are in the Play, for instance the player of

Judas. The orchestra counts a few veterans who played as far back as 1850. The Passion Play of 1900 will be of special interest as regards the music, for besides the «interior» improvements, the acoustic, which of course was practically nil in the open air, is exceptionally good, owing to the arched construction of the audience hall.

Let us hope however that the year 1910 may bring further improvements, that by that time they will have succeeded in finding the original score, and will



Village Band (türkische Musik) in Oberammergau.

possess Dedler's music in its pristine beauty, for, with all due respect for the devoted, clever work of the last Passion music reviser, one question nevertheless arises:

All conductors, Feldigl amongst them, have allowed themselves to be guided in their alterations, by the one general rule, that certain passages are no longer adapted to the taste of the present day; but who can say that we have a better taste in music than our forefathers at the beginning of the nineteenth century? And what right have we, just for the sake of fashion, to alter a work of art, which should be sacred to us?





Passion Play Actors

of the Past.

„How peacefully all the dead do rest“ says the song, and we find in this sentiment a solace, which lets us, almost indifferently, forgetfully, pass over those who have inhabited before ourselves this clod of earth which still bears us. In our own struggles, strifes, and turmoils we almost forget, that they too have struggled and striven, worked and promoted, and that the steps, which we now ascend, high above them, to the nearly finished work, lead over their bodies and are firmly fastened with their sweat, with their tears. — It has always made a peculiarly sad impression upon me, in reading through the chronicles of the Passion Play, to meet with so many talented and great men who lived, struggled, and died, unknown and unrecognised, in the quiet of their far-away village; like the giant trees, which grow up in the heart of the virgin forest, where they delight no eye, spread their wonderful branches and finally decay unseen, fertilizing the earth with the humus of their powerful bodies, whilst a luxurious and vigorous vegetation springs up from the thus enriched soil.

If we could always know, whom the intellectual humus of existences, decayed unnoticed, would serve again as nourishment! Quite suddenly, apparently unaided, without any organic connection, a genius often appears among the people, towering over all, and striking out in new directions through the masses. We search and enquire: where does he come from, where have the germs of his talent been cultivated? It is not a question of inherited genius, no particular talent can be ascertained in the family for generations. And yet who knows how deep the layer is from which the roots of our being derive their nourishment, or whether some great existence, which however never reached development, has not, at some far distant period, which our mind's eye can scarcely appreciate anymore, formed the nutritious matter, from which some great personality, many hundreds of years afterwards, draws its nourishment, and which allows mind-atoms, that were unsuspectedly scattered in the family, to again come to the fore in one united whole.

It would lead too far were I to attempt to enumerate all the prominent personalities of the last three hundred years, but still I should like to mention a few names which are closely interwoven with the history of the Passion village, and to remember those too whom I have known personally.

There is one name above all others which speaks to us from times gone by, echoing from the eighteenth century up to our time: *Georg Lang*, from whom the Lang family are descended, and who established their prosperity. How the poor penniless orphan became what he later was, the respected merchant and owner of a large carving business, how his deep kindly nature grew strong in



Joh. Ev. Lang, Verleger, born Aug. 29th 1798, died May 23rd 1874,
and his wife, Therese, née Hartmann, born Nov. 21st 1801, died Sept. 7th 1878.

the love for his native village, is well told in a little volume of Oberammergau tales which *Joseph Diemer* published in 1850. The influence of his aims and ambitions has been maintained through generations. It is seldom that so many excellent, energetic men have been represented in one family as in the Lang family. Also the *Verleger, Johann Ev. Lang*, often mentioned as a friend of Daisenberger's, and father of the present mayor, was a highly respected and intelligent man of immense practical energy, who did his utmost to help and further the well-being of the parish. Born in the year 1798, he was, up to his death in 1874, the leading intellectual spirit from an industrial, artistic, and economic standpoint. The carving industry owes its new impulse to him, and he founded the large local wood-carving business. It was chiefly through his influence that Ammergau secured Daisenberger as its pastor, the artistic adviser who brought its Passion Play to a high standard of perfection. He founded the useful «Lukasverein» for carvers, and like the rod of Moses, his creative spirit brought forth new life-giving springs in the channels of

his native soil, which had been dried up and laid waste through years of warfare, famine, and conflagrations, springs which watered the roots of the parish's welfare and caused a fruitful prosperity to grow up.

At the same time he was, as a pupil of Dedler, a many-sided musician of no mean capabilities, and did much to advance this art. In 1837 he exchanged with his cousin Martin Lang the original family home, the old *Klepperhaus* for the present business house, formerly an official residence under the jurisdiction of Ettal, and established in it the fine shop and store rooms which at that time would have been no disgrace even to Munich.

King Ludwig I., as also the Bavarian princes, visited his house during their stay in Oberammergau, and without making himself officious, he took advantage of the friendliness of the royal personages to promote the good of the community, in which he was a small King himself, and ruled and governed like a true patriarch, aided by his good and clever spouse.

I have already spoken about «Lüftmaler» Zwink; he too was one of the genial spirits of Am-actors can be enumerated, among them one who played Christ five times, namely from 1800 to 1820 inclusive. And then grandfather Michael Diemer, who sang the prologue in 1840 and 1850 and through overwork contracted a disease of the lungs, to which he succumbed in the prime of his life. No picture shows us thy features, O beloved ancestor; but thy spiritual image stands out before us in radiant beauty. A furrier by trade, thy soul was so full of poetry, of beauty, of energetic vigour, that it has extended to children and children's children. If it is true that the sire of the Diemer family came from the South, through Rosenheim as a wandering fiddler — then we can account for the inexhaustible fund of music, the fresh, lively sense of art, which is ingrained in the family up to this very day, together with the gay sense of roving, peculiar to artistic Bohemianism. — Of the sons of the former president and Prologue, his son Johannes Diemer, whose obituary I give here, became especially famous; he was too well known a personality and too closely interwoven with the Passion Play to be summarily passed over:



Johann Diemer as Choragus (1870).

mergau who exercised an influence for good upon the younger generation. And then the old actors in the Passion, who did great things with but modest material; without any remuneration whatsoever, — for at that time receipts were small and often enough their health and lives were at stake. First of all a certain *Georg Bierling* should be mentioned, as a good musician and actor, who in 1830 took the part of the Prologue. In the Zwink family too, many prominent

Born in 1830 at Unterammergau, he removed, at a tender age, with his parents to Oberammergau, where his father became mayor, or as it was then termed "president", and in the years 1840 and 1850 superintended the direction of the Passion Play and filled the rôle of Choragus or Prologue. Little Jo-



Johann Diemer as Herod (1890).

hannes began his "Passion" career in 1840 as one of the children who kneel at the Cross; in 1850 he sang as a "Schutzgeist"-alto in the play so well described by Devrient; in the year 1860 he himself appeared as Choragus in the place of his father, who died an early death. He retained this rôle also in 1870 and 71 and partly in 1880. The cold damp weather of that summer, which forced the Chorus to sing for hours, exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, in rain and even snow, in dripping garments, made it impossible for Diemer, who had just recovered from a severe inflammation of the lungs, to continue his part: his voice suffered under the tremendous strain, and so

in 1890 he acted the part of King Herod and performed this thankless task in a skilful manner.

As regards his performance as Choragus, there is only one verdict, that Johannes Diemer raised the rôle of Choragus to a significance, which has become traditional. His fine head with the rich curly hair, the dignified calm of his movements, the majesty and dignity of his whole bearing, together with his beautiful voice and his exceptional musical and histrionic gifts, made him a typical figure of unsurpassed perfection.

With the very first words of the Choragus: "*Wurf zum heiligen Staunen Dich nieder, von Gottes Fluch gebeugtes Geschlecht*" — (Cast thyself down in holy worship O race bowed down by God's own curse) a thrill of awe and devotion went through the audience, so overpowering was the impression produced by these few words. He was highly complimented from all sides, and received numerous presents from princely and other personages of high rank.

From 1863 to 1866 Johannes Diemer was president of the community of Oberammergau, later on councillor, and had, together with the *geisll. Rath* the direction of the Passion Play of 1870, which was interrupted by the war.

It was granted to the well-deserving and universally beloved man, in the winter before his death, although in a weak state, to celebrate his fifty-year jubilee as singer, in comparatively good health. But the hope of complete recovery was not fulfilled. On the 8th of May 1896 he succumbed to his complaint, and followed by a funeral procession, such as Ammergau has seldom seen, the departed one was brought to his last resting-place. The music corps and the "*Liederkranz*", whose president he had been for many years past, assisted at the burial ceremony and made it all the more beautiful; and the mayor Johann Lang placed the well-deserved laurel-wreath on the grave, in the name of the grateful community.

Johannes Diemer was of an exceptionally imposing appearance. His whole being was regulated by a law of perfect proportion. With the warm-hearted enthusiasm and delicate perception of the true artist he combined unusual, clear, and practical common sense. Faithful to the traditions of his forefathers, yet he was always ready to comply with the demands of modern times. He also took his share in every useful and beneficial undertaking in the parish, for instance, as chair-

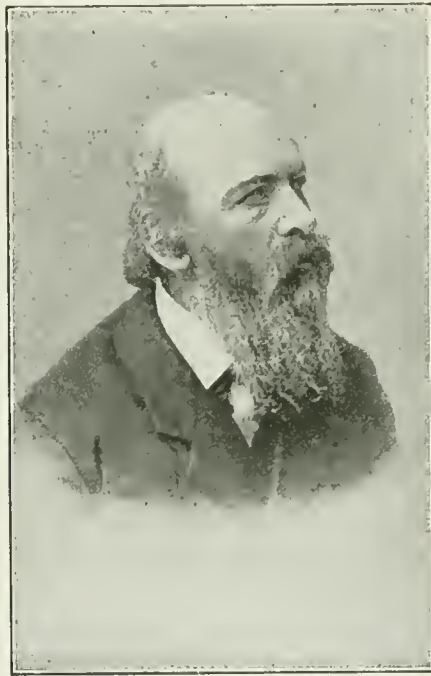
man of the "Raiffeisenverein".— His purchasing the "*Marokkoschlösschen*", formerly the property of King Ludwig II., bears witness also that his heart was in the right place. The "Schlösschen" was to be sold for a low figure to the first-comer. In order to rescue this souvenir of their never-forgotten King, to whom they owed so much gratitude, and not to let it fall into strange hands, Diemer bought the "Schlöss-

chen", and with infinite trouble and at great expense had it taken to pieces, brought to Oberammergau, and set up there in his grounds not far from the Crucifixion Group.

With Johannes Diemer one of the best of men, a type of the good old Ammergau, has departed. Wherever he went his noble character gained him high respect, and he was a worthy representative of his native village. —

But I must also mention his brother, *Joseph Diemer*, my poor father-in-law, who died only too soon; for if we speak of the faithful hearts of Oberammergau we may assuredly call him one of the most faithful.

Although he had studied philology in Munich, and then in the year 1849, discouraged and disappointed, turned his back upon his old home to spend many years in England and America, yet his whole heart was devoted to his country. He had remained German to the core, and whilst abroad took a lively interest in the position which Germans occupied there, a subject which now and again caused him deep sorrow. Many beautiful poems, in which his



Joseph Diemer.

gauer G'stanzeln which Maximilian Schmidt has inserted in one of his novels, and which the actor Dreher has so often sung in "*Jägerblut*", owe their origin to him. He had an uncommonly keen appreciation for the native dialect, which he made his special study, and his little poems in dialect are simply perfect. A hearty friendship existed between him and Daisenberger, who makes mention of his merits in his little "*Chronik*". — Music came natural to him, and he had an exceptional appreciation for folk-songs. He brought several with him from Ireland and America, and his soul was an inexhaustible spring of beautiful melodies, which he has to a great extent conferred upon his children. — Poor father, you too were one of those who never in your life knew that which ordinary mortals call luck, and yet you were always contented, for you belonged to those who could say of themselves: "*Was über allen Schein, trag ich in mir.*" (I bear that within me which passeth mere show.)

yearning for a long-missed home finds expression date from that time. When he, having returned to Munich after many years of weary toil, had lost his fortune in large building enterprises, he came back with his family to his beloved native village to devote the rest of his days to it. By laying out pretty walks he endeavoured to open up the beauties of the neighbourhood to the visitors. He wrote delightful little musical plays, which were performed there, and few people are aware that the charming "*Ammer-*

If we mention the famous „Passion families, we must also remember the Flunger family, of which already the third generation is now taking part in the Passion Play.

It was in the year 1850, that Eduard Devrient wrote that famous description, which at the time attracted the attention of all circles to the Passion Play of Oberammergau. He wrote words in high praise of the one who took the part of Christ, the drawing-master Tobias Flunger, whose noble and dignified bearing, the beauty and symmetry of his movements, combined with a wonderfully typical



Tobias Flunger, who acted as Christ in 1850.

Christ figure, filled him with enthusiasm and charmed and delighted him and many others besides. In that summer, people of all nationalities flocked in thousands to the Passion Play, which from that year became the common property of the whole world, and the rush to it increased more and more. But all who witnessed that Passion Play were wonderfully moved by the strikingly pathetic figure of the Saviour, as acted by the drawing-master, Tobias Flunger.

Even now, after fifty years, old people still tell of the dignity and majesty of Flunger's Christ.

Tobias Flunger was born on the 16th of January, 1816. The young man, who already in 1830 took part in the Passion Play as singer, and at an early age displayed a great talent for drawing, attracted the attention of Heinrich Thiersch, professor at the University, who happened to be present, and who procured him the means and opportunity to frequent the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich. After a successful course of study, he devoted himself for some time to a practical training, for which opportunity was offered him by his being employed on the buildings of King Ludwig I. But the longing for his native village, which is natural to all mountain people, induced him to forego a promising art career, or a definite position in Munich. He wanted to return to his home, and so the government offered him the post of teacher of drawing and modelling in Oberammergau, with a salary of 60 gulden yearly, which was small even for that time.

Thus he worked in the parish as teacher up to the year 1867, tied and restricted in every respect by poor and needy circumstances.

Who can conceive what this honest man with the true soul of an artist, sacrificed to art and the ideal in his narrow sphere, — sacrifices of vital energy, of material goods, without hope of recognition or of the fame which outside in the world beckons like a pale star to him who has placed his all in one idea.

To famish and starve for an ideal, where no recognition was forth coming, where no honour rewarded his self-denial, and to find all that perfectly natural, such was the silent heroism of the poor Ammergauer drawing-master. But there was another ideal for him to live for.

In the year 1850 he was entrusted, as already mentioned, with the rôle of «Christ», which he performed in a manner corresponding to his idealistic nature. In the years 1860 and 1870—71 he acted as Pilate», and on his account Daisenberger revised and considerably enlarged the part beautiful daughters, one of whom (Franziska Flunger) excellently rendered the part of Mary in the year 1870, and they could never sufficiently express their enthusiasm.



Franziska Flunger as Mary, in 1870.

of the Roman Governor; finally in the year 1880 he acted in the character of the apostle «Matthew». Many who came to the Passion Play visited the former «Christus», and during the season of the Play the little house was never without visitors, who came to admire him and his

With the Play the halo of glory, which admiration had woven about his head, died away, as the last glow of sunset dies away in the sky, and the long night of nine years came, which intervenes between every Passion season. Again

he was nothing more than the poor man, working away in the sweat of his brow. Besides his occupation as teacher, he earned something by carving, which he brought to a high degree of perfection; his animal subjects have become famous in the whole neighbourhood. Together with his industrious wife he cultivated his little plot of ground, the produce of which barely sufficed to supply food for him and his five children.

Meanwhile fate dealt hardly with him: grief and slights, sickness and death! A beautiful and talented daughter (Josepha Flunger) was taken away from him in her prime after a long and severe illness. She was decidedly one of the most talented of the young girls of Oberammergau, who as a rule do not display as much talent as the men.

To eminent histrionic powers, which she displayed in several practice plays, was added great personal beauty. She was an appearance on whom Nature had ungrudgingly and unstintingly lavished all its charms. A richly endowed and warm-hearted artistic temperament. And this beautiful, scarcely developed bud was blighted by the wantonness of a village Don Juan, to whom all the first love of her young,



Tobias Flunger as Pilate 1870.



Josepha Flunger as «Genius» (1870).

warm heart had been given. Although everyone in Oberammergau knew her good and hitherto blameless character and could make every allowance for her, although public feeling was unanimous in its verdict against the base seducer and pronounced her free from all blame, yet she could not take part any more in the Passion Play, in accordance with old tradition, and she it was who had been selected as the Magdalene for the year 1880. The Passion committee would have made an exception in her case on account of her otherwise excellent good qualities and her magnificent appearance, but several prudes and old women of both sexes raised their voices against the *Sünderin*, and the committee was obliged to yield.

The poor girl could not get over this mortification, and positively died of a broken heart. Yet she was more innocent, and is certainly more likely to have found grace before God than many a one who stands spotless in the eyes of the world, and yet carries perhaps some secret sin in his heart. Poor Josepha, her shame was pitilessly trumpeted forth into the world. May these lines serve to retrieve the wrong done to her.

When we made the acquaintance of old Flunger in the year 1884, he and his cheery and prudent wife had already retired from active life, and left the management of the property to their son. In the humble, but cosy and tidy apartment he sat at his carving table, though the old fingers, so strikingly noble in form, but bent and drawn by much work, were almost completely useless in



Flunger House.
House of Anna Flunger, the Mary of 1900.

his last years. But occupation was a necessity to him in his old age. This little room was the haven which he now rarely left, and in which he found shelter, surrounded by memories of the past.

What an all surmounting peace dwelt in the hearts of this old couple. Fortune and honours which had fallen to their lot did not make them vain, misfortune did not embitter them.

«*s is auch rüber gungen*» (but that's all past and over now) was the closing sentence with which old Flunger ended every narrative bearing upon sad and painful incidents in his life.

How many an hour have we not passed in the «*Austragsstübchen*» and found comfort in the worldly wisdom of the old people. There he used to recount to us recollections out of his long life, and his fine dark eyes still lit up with youthful fire when he became absorbed in questions of art or in subjects relating to the sacred Play. His conversation was captivating, often humorous, always highly

intelligent, and he himself was as little conscious of it as he was of the refined yet imposing beauty of his appearance. He was imbued with a fine appreciation for art, and it was touching to see how he utilised his odd moments by devoting them to artistic productions for his own advancement. Whole portfolios of water colour paintings, sketches, and drawings which he had made during his spare hours bear witness to his zeal and fond devotion to art.

On the 12th of March 1887 his wife died, a cheery amiable old soul with a shrewd and bright wit. The loss affected the old man terribly; he had lived most happily with her, — «but that's all past and over now» said he, with his

usual resignation. Death had no terrors for him. He often spoke about life and death in his clear and incisive manner, and his philosophy of life was summed up in the words of the Bible: — «and though men be so strong, that they come to four-score years; yet is their strength then but labour and sorrow». — On the 29th of December 1887 he died; a fit of apoplexy had carried him away in the night, suddenly and without pain.

Now his grand-daughter plays «Mary» this year, as his daughter once did, and the «*Flungerhäuschen*» will be visited to-day, as it was half a century ago, by shoals of admirers, who seek in the countenance of the grand-daughter the spirit of the grandfather.

Another powerful dramatic talent of that time was the father

of «Christus» Mayr, Jakob Mayr, who died in 1854. He acted as Caiaphas in 1830, 1840, and 1850, and according to all accounts must have been a regular Titan, some of whose gigantic strength has been transmitted to his descendants.

His exact opposite as regards individuality was the Judas of the years 1850, 1860, 1870—71, and 1880, Gregor Lechner. Devrient praises his fine appearance and his magnificent acting, and the fame of his performance during these thirty years spread to all corners of the earth. The English in particular raved about Judas. When we saw him in the year 'eighty, the tragic force was certainly already lacking, and although his appearance was still extremely characteristic and interesting, yet it was already that of an old man, exciting pity rather than aversion. And yet when you saw the fiery eyes, the fine, clearly cut profile, you could easily imagine that this man, both in his appearance, with the red beard, as well as in his acting, had been Ed. Devrient's ideal. Gregor Lechner was a true child of the Passion. Born in 1819, he was already one of the mob in 1830, in 1840 he was



Gregor Lechner as Judas (1880).
(Judas of 1850—1880)



Gregor Lechner as Judas (1870).



Modestus Stickel as High Priest (1870).

a priest in the temple; then he played Judas, a part which both his father and his great-grandfather had filled before him. In 1890, owing to failing health, he contented himself with the small rôle of Simon of Bethany, and died soon after, in 1891.

Gregor Lechner was an extremely refined, deep feeling artist, and I have always had the impression that his part as a traitor really caused him pain. He was a splendid carver, especially of miniature figures, and how many minutely executed carvings of the Last Supper, must have wandered over to England from his industrious and skilful hands. Lechner was an exceptionally modest man, of quiet dignity, displaying high intelligence in artistic matters, impartial in his judgement, as he was unassuming and temperate in his life. It was also a great pleasure to listen to him when he talked of old times. He was no puffed-up individuality, but a spirited, intelligent actor and a loving, sincere, God-fearing soul, whom our Saviour

has certainly placed among his elect in heaven. His son, the gifted drawing master, Anton Lechner, has this year been chosen as an understudy for Judas in the event of the latter becoming ill; thus it may come about that the rôle of Judas will be handed down to the fourth generation.

Another interesting figure was Modestus Stickel, the *Pilate* in the year 1850, and later on *High Priest*. He had such a characteristic head that one felt involuntarily inclined to rank him among the patriarchs of old.

A noble, sympathetic personality, whom I always think of with sorrow, was also old Sebastian Lang, the father of two renowned sons: the sculptor Otto Lang, and the music-director Eduard Lang. Born in 1830, he formed one of the Passion orchestra as far back as 1850, being an exceptionally capable and finished musician, and up to the year of his death in 1895 took an active part not only in the orchestra but also in the village council, to which he belonged nearly all his life. He also always had a seat and a voice on the Passion Committee.



Sebastian Lang.

He, like almost all the Langs, was a relation of the reigning family of the Langs, and a man of prepossessing appearance. — If certain of the Ammergauers verified the «Passion» spirit to the outer world by their acting and their performance, he on the other hand showed the true genuine Ammergau spirit by a touchingly beautiful home life and by a superior idealism in every sphere of daily life. He was also a clever carver and experienced in gardening and fruit growing. You cannot imagine a more delightful and cosy parlour than that of the old gentleman and his family. Such a peaceful comfortable room with wonderful home-grown plants in the windows, pictures, photographs, reproductions of beautiful works of art, partly of works of his son, here and there ivy climbing up the walls; a room so full of sunshine and warm-heartedness that in later life a sense of yearning for all this sometimes steals over us.

We will remember too the grandfather of the present *Christus*, the old Franz Paul Lang, who repre-



Franz Paul Lang,
Grandfather of «Christus»-Lang,
as Herod 1870.



Franz Paul Lang,
Grandfather of «Christus»-Lang,
as a Pharisee in 1890.

sented Herod in the years 1860 and 1870. The cheery old man, who occupied quite a patriarchal position in the community, danced a few years ago, with his hale and hearty spouse, the «Ehrentanz» (dance of honour) at his golden wedding. He has not lived to see his son and grandson both filling important rôles in the Passion Play, the son as Herod, the grandson as «Christ»; he was laid to rest a short time before.

I should like to remember so many yet, whom the earth now covers, so many who were full of talent and goodwill, but time and space fail me, and yet there are so many interesting and characteristic personalities still to be mentioned. Am I to remember thee, old Barabbas of past decades, thou poorest of the poor, with the wonderfully rugged head. Thou hast found no Rembrandt to whom thou mightst sit as model, but thy image still exists and will certainly live on by reason of its grand and striking characteristics. Thou hadst to represent the gruesome picture of a thorough scoundrel, and yet thou wast the most honest soul in the world, and hast sacrificed for thy country two promising sons in the war of the 'seventies, but thou wast as proud of thy part as ever a man can be of his mission in life. No longer I

see thee on the accustomed road, where thou so often passed by and greeted us, old «Katzentoni», friend of the late *geistl. Rath*, with whom the latter, for the space of a life-time, joined regularly every afternoon in a quiet game. His family name was *Liebherr*; he played the horn in the band even when quite an old

man; and he one of those who still remembered the fire on the Kofel, and who had been under Dedler's leadership. To me there was always something uncanny about him, the poor «*Katzentoni*». First of all on account of his nickname, which I have only recently discovered was the name by which he was always called at home, and which I always involuntarily connected with cat-killing or some similar cruelty practised on my four-footed pets, but then also on account of his perfectly abnormal and monstrous ugliness. His nose was as broad as three ordinary people's noses, and to spare. Only the great respect which he enjoyed in the village as a friend and companion of long years standing of the *geistlicher Rath*, and as a well-situated, thoroughly respectable man, modified somewhat my timidity at his remarkable appearance, and I responded readily to his friendly greeting. — And now we no longer see him among the living either; he has joined his old friend in Heaven.

A man, whom Daisenberger likewise speaks high-



J. Allinger, Barabbas of 1880.

ly of, was the old Georg Zwink, who carved the wonderful «Holy Manger», which now belongs to the sacristan Lang, and at the present moment is exhibited in a special building as an object of interest. For thirty years he was churchwarden, in 1850, 1860, and 1870 arranger of the tableaux in the Passion Play, had, especially in the 'sixties, a large wood-carving business, and was looked upon in every respect as a serviceable and useful member of the community.

Sadly missed, among those who have died within the last ten years or so, are: — the fine tenor, Eduard Zwink, an excellent and in every way thoroughly trained musician, who could play almost any instrument, and was for a considerable time conductor of the village band; and within the last few years the two young musicians, Leo Lang, the son of the conductor Eduard Lang, and Dominikus Schilcher, two talented young people of great promise.

Among the dramatic lights, who in the last year or two have gone to their last home, is also a near relation of the Mayr family, in which talent seems to flourish in profusion. His name was also Mayr, with the pet name of the «*Spitzer*», and in the Play of 1890 he was chief of the traders in the temple. A remarkably characteristic Jewish head, with red hair and pointed beard, had this little man, whose face bore the trace of long years of suffering; half a Jewish conspirator,

and half, one of those realistic, distorted Christs, lying in the tomb with the fixed expression of a corpse. I once saw him in a Bavarian play, I believe it was the *Meineidbauer*, act the part of a dying vagabond, and I must say that I have never seen, even in the best theatres, anything so naturally and skilfully portrayed. He lived in great poverty, barely supporting himself and his numerous family as a wood-turner. He died at an early age of consumption, a disease which also carried off some of his children. He was a quiet, melancholy man, and I shall never forget the expression of his countenance when my husband painted him as a study, and had involuntarily depicted something of the serenity and peace of death in the face. — For a long time he stood motionless before the picture with a sad yearning look which seemed to say: — «If only I were as far as that.» He had not much farther to go, poor fellow; only a few years, and then he was called away to his eternal home. A pious christian, and a good father to his family.

I have now paid due reverence to the memories of all those who belonged, so to say, to the «Upper Ten» of the Passion which «defiantly mocks all earthly fates», as Lenau says. If I give a more detailed account of him, than of many another important personage, it is because biographies and descriptions of almost all the other actors have appeared, which commemorate them, and make them known to the whole world, whereas this poor fellow has, up to the present, found nobody to speak a good word for him.

How did we get to know him? It was on a fine summer's evening in the 'eighties, that we, that is my Mamma and I, were walking along the Graswang road when we suddenly found ourselves, at a sharp turn of the road, confronted by a team of oxen, so close to us that we could hardly manage to get out of the way. The oxen were snow-white and so beautifully groomed that they fairly shone; no mother could keep her child cleaner and tidier than these animals were kept. The driver of the waggon however went bare-footed beside them, arrayed in old patched trousers and a ragged shirt, but the way in which he drove the animals and called out to them — in the poise of his head — was something so majestic, that we could not refrain from observing the man more closely. He had a beautiful,



Andreas Mayr as Chief of the Traders, 1890.

Play, and my readers will by this time certainly have come to the conclusion that apparently only good, well-behaved, respectable people exist in Ammergau. Will they forgive me if I now introduce them for once in a while to a regular downright ragamuffin? To a thorough scamp, but one of those over whom Heaven perhaps rejoices more than over the ninety nine just ones — a rogue with the jewel of genius in his soul — one of the poorest under the sun, and yet with that right of proud self-confidence

strictly classical face, with dark beard and whiskers, and dark, melancholy eyes, and an expression which completely fascinated us. My Mamma called out to him some compliment about his beautiful animals, which caused a glow of pleasure to light up his sunburnt countenance, and whilst passing by each other, a short conversation ensued, from which we gathered that he was a farm labourer at a peasant's. When the question: — married? was put to him, he threw back his head, laughed heartily, showing two rows of white teeth, and called out: — Naa, frei, lusti und ledi! Hüh (No!—Free, merry and single.—Woh!), whereupon he cracked his whip over the oxen, and we stood and watched him as he turned the corner, bearing himself like a king. Who was this man? That was Pomagul, the «Schuler Lisi» said, an acquaintance of ours who happened to be coming along in the opposite direction. — His real name was Alois Mayr, and he was a true sprig of the illustrious Passion dynasty of the Mayrs, an actual cousin of Christus Mayr's, with whom he certainly had nothing in common except genius, the name, and the tall figure. In all other respects there was a world-wide difference between the highly honoured and distinguished *Verleger's* family and the poor farm hand who could scarcely procure himself a decent suit of clothes, much less a decent position. His parents were poor enough, but as long as his mother was still alive, he had at least a home, he had somebody who put him to rights again when he threatened to become too utterly disreputable. In the year 1880 he played as Selpha, the chief of the rabble, and at that time caused considerable sensation among the visitors by his splendid acting and magnificent bearing. Then when in a practice play, the *hl. Udalrich, oder die Hunnenschlacht am Lechfeld*, he acted the part of Pomagul, the leader of the Huns, with a fire and intensity which was simply overpowering, the name of Pomagul adhered to him, under which he was soon better known than under his own. There was something mysterious about poor Pomagul: if anyone asked, nobody seemed to be able to say anything bad against him; his master gave him the character of being a most faithful, trustworthy servant, he never had a love affair — he never made overtures to any girl, no one could accuse him of coarseness. He was the best of nurses; wherever there were any cases of serious or contagious illnesses to be attended to, Pomagul was fetched, and the honest fellow was once almost beside himself with grief, when a typhus patient whom he was nursing, had eaten up, during his short absence, the batter dumplings, which were intended for the nurse's dinner, and had died in consequence of indigestion. And when he had worked all day, more than any of the other servants, he read, through the long nights, all the books which he could manage to get hold of, and studied his parts. In a word, for six whole days he was the best, most sober, industrious fellow in the world, blameless in every respect, but then Saturday evening came, when he received his wages, and then he went into the inn, where a host of jovial friends were awaiting him, to whom he related his jokes, who teased him and riled him, and worked him up into such a state of excitement, that by Sunday evening, Pomagul was a ruined man, without a penny in his pocket. My mother wanted to better him — at that time she often held reading-evenings with the most prominent actors, and Pomagul was entrusted with some of the more important parts. It was not an unalloyed pleasure to have him — for although he wore boots and even a jacket on these evenings, yet he brought with him the Olympic stable odour of the Homeric cowherds in its natural purity into our drawing-room — but his behaviour was perfect, he might have spent all his live in the best society. He came with his

part already prepared, and when he opened his mouth and began to read with his beautiful musical voice, the fire of genius sparkled in his eyes, and his expressive face showed every gradation of light and shade in his rôle. My husband wanted to paint him as the antique Heros or a northern warrior — he maintained that he was hardly likely to find a better model for a tragic, war-like figure — unfortunately his intention was never carried out. Just at this time my mother was building her «Schlösschen»; Pomagul was overseer and caretaker, with the understanding that he would be discharged at the first signs of insobriety. It almost seemed as if he wanted to become a respectable man; for a long time he was the most trustworthy and conscientious caretaker, he even resisted the temptation of Saturday evenings. But soon the wiles and seductions of his false friends, perhaps too of those who were envious of his position, carried the day, — he went to the public-house, got drunk, made all sorts of impudent and insulting remarks, — and finally, after all warnings had proved of no avail, had to be dismissed. He returned to his old place as farm labourer, — but in the end his master lost patience with him. In the year 1890 he again acted as the chief of the rabble in the Passion, then he sank deeper and deeper into his drinking habits, and finally, to prevent his entirely going to the bad, the parish gave him the post of gravedigger, which he discharged with the same earnestness and dignity with which he had performed his farm work. A disease of the lungs necessitated his admission into the hospital. But as true genius is always accompanied by a germ of tragedy, so, in like manner, does it contain in itself the curse of defiance towards gods and men, — and this tragic force of opposition caused the weak and helpless invalid to struggle against conventional law. Sundry slight offences against the hospital regulations brought him into conflict with the nurses, but when the latter went so far as to require him to go to confessional, the patience of the former leader of the Huns was at an end: — «*Nix schlechts hob' i nie nix tho und beichten thuen i wann i mag — aber nit, wann's ös anschafft's*». (I've never done any harm to anybody, and I shall confess when I want to — not when you want me to.) And upon further urging him to meditate within himself and to repent, he remarked: — «*G'stohl'n hob i nit und was i Unrechts than hob, das hab i mir selber anthan, — koan andern Menschen!*» (I have stolen nothing, and whatever wrong I have done, I have done to myself — to no one else.) The doctor, who attended his case, argued kindly with him about his defiant resistance; he listened to him quietly, but one afternoon he took advantage of the nurse's absence, dressed himself, packed up his few belongings, left the sheltering hospital, and went away to the inn, to his friend «*Mussel*». There he ordered some food; then haemorrhage of the lungs set in, which in a few minutes put an end to his miserable existence.

He was put into the ground, unmourned and unwept for — without a word to do justice to his great talent and the good that was in him. Certainly, from a christian point of view, his conduct was unpardonable, but then we must not use a christian standard when we judge for instance the Titanic defiance of a Prometheus. A man, who, in the wretchedness of surroundings like his, in the physical and moral wreck of an existence like his, has still saved so much moral freedom, so much inward integrity, that he will not surreptitiously obtain the grace of Heaven, unless he feels *true* repentance and an *inward* longing, stands, in my eyes, be his moral defects ever so great, so high above the dull, stupid crowd of average apathetic beings, that we certainly ought not to grudge him forgiveness.

Do we know whether the right word has been pronounced, the word of reconciliation between this erring soul and its God, which shall turn its defiance into love? We do not know, and therefore we have no right to condemn, for not *every* human soul is susceptible to *every* kind of treatment, and harshness only too easily engenders harshness. At all events Pomagul was one of the most interesting individuals, which I have ever come across in my life; a living proof how the seed of genius springs up in the most uncultivated soil, strikes root, and ultimately, because no space is allotted it for further development, destroys the ground in which it luxuriates, just as the parasitic plant destroys the trunk of the tree on which it grows. To me there is something inexpressibly touching in the, I might almost say, *helpless* ingenuousness of these elementary natures, such as we often come across in the Passion village. There is an old Swedish song dating from the time of Jenny Lind's younger days, which runs; —

*O fiel ein Fünkchen von der Flamme,
Die uns die Lust giebt und den Schmerz,
In deine Seele — die Gottesgabe
Der Genius strömte in dein Herz.
Lass aufwärts seine Flamme streben,
Von oben war's, wo sie entstand:
Zwar wisse, sie wird verzehren dein Leben
Doch war's ja Gott, der sie gesandt.*

The educated man on whom the kindling spark has fallen — recognizes, in the burning torments of the fire in his soul, the proximity of the Divine — the poor peasant, on the other hand, does not know for what reason and by what means he is burnt to slag, which mankind contemptuously kicks aside, because it only sees the charred slag, but does not recognise the fire which produced it.

The poor despised Pomagul and the famous Ludwig Devrient — they had perhaps the same quality of genius in them. Both took the same downward path, but whereas the upward-tending flame of his genius invariably carried the famous actor up with it again and made his name immortal, the suppressed Prometheus fire in the soul of the village vagabond died out in the dirt and dust of his wretched poverty — at the drinking-table of the village inn.

Herewith, I close my review of the departed — and if some, whose names were worthy of mention, have been omitted, I hope that I shall be forgiven.

The world has forgotten and passed over so many who did not deserve to be forgotten; may I not be singled out and made a scapegoat, if, without wishing to, I fall into the same error.





Veterans of the Passion Play.

When the «*Kofelweibla*» has placed the little Ammergau mortal in the cradle of his forefathers, and the new-comer has wonderingly opened his eyes for the first time to look at his strange surroundings, then a second life *in* life at once begins for the young spark of humanity, — his dream of the «Passion», and its fulfilment. I do not speak of course of those inquisitive little beings who have taken it into their heads to come into the world just in a «Passion» summer or even during a Passion performance, when the whole house is full of guests, and hear in their very cradles English ladies recounting their impressions of the Passion Play. — It is an understood thing to every Ammergau child that it was born to take part in the Passion. Its first thoughts, its first ambitions, are for the Passion Play. The first part which the Ammergau child is allowed to appear in, after it has been weaned, is that of Adam's child in the lap of Eve, in the tableaux, — the last, that of Moses, or Ahasuerus, or Barabbas, or one of the older disciples, or the High Priest. Between these two stages lies a period of sixty to seventy years, the full span of a man's life, slowly but surely leading to eternity. As the first great happiness and honour for a young Ammergauer is to take part in the Passion, so too is it his last deep sorrow, the last bitter disappointment, almost more trying than death itself, to have to give up his favourite rôle. Even for him, who is interested in, or in any way connected with the conditions of life in the Passion village, every new election will be as it were a capital punishment — he knows that at least some of his friends will receive the heaviest and most cutting blow in their lives, and he trembles for the fine performers who on account of age must necessarily fall victims to the cruel sentence pronounced by the Passion Play Committee. — This year too some such sentences have been pronounced and they have been felt all the more, as those, who have been pensioned off, are, a part of them, still in their prime, standing at the zenith of their dramatic capabilities; others, so closely connected with the fame of the Passion Play of the last thirty or forty years, that one would almost feel inclined to think that the Play without

them must necessarily suffer. It is true that fresh talent is continually appearing, and the young people demand their rights, — but those, who consider the performances of certain individual actors to have been perfect, will question whether it is not presumptuous to set aside one of these old hands, who has filled his part so magnificently, in order to make room for the younger generation, who come to the fore soon enough in any case. It will surely not be regarded as a slight to the young people, if we, with all confidence in their budding talent, cannot think of their great predecessors without feelings of regret, and if we do the latter the honour of at least recounting their various, brilliant achievements of the past. — First of all we must mention our able Bürgermeister Johann Lang who this year, the first time for sixty years, does not take an active part in the Passion Play. In 1840 he took part in the Tableaux as the child of Adam who holds the apple; in 1860 he played as Caiaphas for the first time, which part he has played for three decades. Johann Lang's capabilities as Bürgermeister are not only thoroughly appreciated by the community but also by many outsiders. He



Joh. Lang

Bürgermeister Lang
Director and Manager of the
Passion Plays.

is otherwise only to be found in royal families. This is particularly noticeable in the Lang family. We have already seen what an important personage Joh. Ev. Lang, the father of the present mayor was. His strong will, his vivacious spirit, his captivating humour, and his great insight which enabled him to always keep collected under trying circumstances, have been inherited by his son. Such was Bürgermeister Lang when we first made his acquaintance 20 years ago. And if his intellectual energy has more and more decreased with the years, his clear eye become dimmed, it is owing not so much to old age as to care and sorrow, and to the continued wearying struggle with those powers of which it is rightly written:

Seid Ihr denn würdig des Guten, das nur der ewige Krieg gegen Euch selber

is the helmsman and ruler of the Passion village. A clear-headed strong-minded and, we cannot deny it, somewhat tyrannical man who has governed this little parish of artistic souls for the last 25 years; an obliging man with a mind above all party differences; and who that even his enemies must own to, has given advice and help either with deep earnestness or kindly good-humour in all the vicissitudes and chances of life. I have already drawn attention to the strong and characteristic individuality of the Lang family. — It is a remarkable thing that in the Passion village the character of the more prominent families is as sharply defined as

erzeugt». That he who has carried on this war for a whole life-time as Bürgermeister Lang has done — who has had to reckon with the stupidity and stubbornness of certain individual elements — with the spite of others — who has had to guard the interests of the community in the outside world, and its spiritual and intellectual interests at home — who has been hindered on the other hand by a stubborn conservatism against any improvements — that he had grey hairs

before his time and that his robust constitution is broken, is not surprising. — It does not always depend upon how much a man does in his life but upon how much *energy* he expends in doing what he does. Such strong na-

tures as Bürgermeister Lang's always and everywhere make opponents from the very fact that their mere way of going to work has something defiant in it which is

noble broad-minded nature, above all that is vulgar, but with all the abruptness, the stubborn idealism, and the inflexible obstinacy of his race. — Such people are hated on the one hand, worshipped on the other, and usually falsely judged. Now that my readers know something of the characteristics of this man, who is called the Bismarck of Ammergau, they will believe me when I tell them that an intimate

lacking in the ordinary every-day mortal. They themselves call up so to say the resistance against which their powers are spent. —

Bürgermeister Lang is no martyr, though the highly cultivated and refined man

has sacrificed a very great deal to his convictions, and during his life has waived nearly everything that was not in direct connection with his *duty*; nor can one say of him that he was one of those insipid colourless saintly figures who move sentimental souls to tears. Of him it may be said: «He is a man, take him all in all» — he is a man of strong impulses, not without traits of genius, a



Bürgermeister Lang (Caiaphas 1880).

connection exists between his real life and his representation of Caiaphas. His Caiaphas was a dramatic performance such as has never been, nor is ever likely to be seen again. — There was nothing artificial about it, nothing affected, it was cast in the same mould as the performer himself. There was no studied effect. The man, with the independence of a superior mind, with the commanding glance of the despotic High Priest, with the amiability and irresistible eloquence of a



Bürgermeister Lang.
(Caiaphas 1860—70—71—80 and 1890.) Photo taken in 1890.

highly educated man of the world, was not only the fanatical, spiteful enemy of Christ — he was a man whom at the commencement you were forced to think well of — an aristocrat in whose inborn nobility you believed, to whose forcible logic you could not deny a certain amount of justification. — The way in which his fiery eye swept over the audience, in which he swayed the crowd by a simple movement of his hand, and in which his growing fury shows itself more and more; and then the way in which, with gradually rising expression, which the greatest actor might envy him, his powerful voice bursts forth over the rabble, like a storm which lashes up the waves of the raging sea, all that must have been seen to be believed. Most actors are content if they perform their parts with a moderate amount of intelligence. In the case of Johann Lang however three factors were combined which even the best actors do not as a rule possess: — firstly his outward appearance, the clearly cut expressive features with the bright eyes; secondly his powerful voice and his dramatic talents; and thirdly the strong, free and inflexible individuality, the power of a mind, which, even though it was only that of a village ruler, had something of a Caesar about it.

To me the figure of the Bürgermeister as Caiaphas was so typical that I cannot imagine the part played otherwise, and I do not think that anyone who has ever seen this man in that part will ever forget it.

He will not appear again on the stage, but he still takes an active part, by directing the Passion Play and training the young aspirants. What that means, everyone who has had a nearer acquaintance with the task of the stage-manager of the Passion Play, well knows. To bring about combined acting and to direct the scenic arrangements is by no means all that is necessary, every word must be criticized, every false accentuation, or a too conspicuous use of dialect must be got rid of, and how often the stubborn material turns out useless even under the strong

will and excellent teaching of the master. Let us hope that his spirit will long pervade the Passion Play.

Bürgermeister Lang is now a man of about 65 years of age; of prepossessing appearance with a winning manner; a thorough man of the world. His interesting head with its white hair has scarcely altered with the course of years and he could play Caiaphas just as well to-day as 30 years ago, provided that his white hair were dyed a golden colour. For many years he has been elected mayor of the place, and sometimes in the *Landrat*. He has received many marks of distinction from the government, and honours and orders of all descriptions have been bestowed upon him by various royal personages. What he has done for the parish will only be appreciated by a later generation. Under his leadership Ammergau has advanced in a way never dreamed of before. Two years ago he lost his wife, a heavy blow to the ageing man, all the more so as she had always relieved him of the practical cares of daily life. She was of an energetic and industrious temperament and was a devoted companion to the man who stood so high above her in the intellectual scale, whose individuality she always tried to conform to, though often enough it was quite unintelligible to her. She was a simple peasant girl from Graswang, but a wife of the highest integrity and of true modesty, economical and practical, and of untiring industry. Her death has made a gap in the old mayor's home which can never be filled again, and which is painfully realised by all who were closely connected with the family. The mayor's eldest daughter who is a clever carver, has married a Lang, and is surrounded by a troop — only one or two are wanting to make the dozen — of healthy children. In 1880 she made an excellent representative of Martha. The youngest daughter Rosa, who played the part of Mary in 1890 in a manner which, with the exception of Franziska Flunger has never been seen during the last half century, has entered a convent. The severe strain of the year 1890 when she had to carry on, besides her rôle, nearly the whole correspondence of



Bürgermeister Lang in his sitting-room.

a parish clerk, cast her, after the Passion Play, upon a bed of sickness. A serious attack of brain fever, combined with mental suffering, brought about by a sad disappointment in her life, gave rise to low-spirited depression which rendered her re-election for this year impossible. In the convent the poor girl has found rest for her tired

soul. The mayor's only son is a clever doctor: it has unfortunately so far not been granted to him to work in the parish of his native village, for his election to the post of local practitioner was opposed by a party which is on no friendly footing with the mayor. Perhaps it will be permitted to the old man, who during a lifetime has sacrificed health and strength in the service of the parish, to have, in his latter days, his son by his side. It would be the least that the community



Rosa Lang
24 April 1890.

Rosa Lang, daughter of the mayor, as the Virgin Mary 1890.

could offer as a token of gratitude to their father for having devoted his whole long life to their interests. — And so we will take leave of our old friend, with the wish that having entered among the veterans he may still be as beneficial to Ammergau and its Passion Play as he has been during his time of service. — As long as man breathes he lives, and «to live» means for a nature like the mayor's «to work». May his activity long remain unabated.

It sometimes happens in Ammergau that in July or August a sudden snow-fall occurs. Snow-white stands the venerable head of the old Kofel, snow-white stand the mountains round about, and man looks wonderingly at them with a dread feeling that they will perhaps remain so for ever. But then the sun comes and with a smiling embrace kisses away the white powder from the mountain's forehead, and the giants stand out again in all their old youth and freshness.

But with mankind it is different. He, upon whose head the snow of old age has fallen before its time, is kissed by no sun of love and charity, even though the face beneath glows with youthful beauty and freshness. And so it is with one

of our veterans. For several years we have seen the snow over the still youthful brow, but we comforted ourselves with the thought — when the warm sun of the Passion breaks forth, it will melt away the snow, and our giant will stand before us in renewed strength and beauty.

But the Passion year came, and the snow remained — though an Etna glowed beneath it, it remained — and a death-like chill struck our hearts, for we heard: «he is too old for his part,» — and the man with the white head and burning heart «went out and wept bitterly». His heart is not broken, — the poet undervalues the strength and endurance of the average sound human heart; — but it has suffered, suffered severely.

How did the white hair come so early on the head of this vigorous man? Apart from one or two acute illnesses, Mayr has a robust, healthy frame, sound to the core; but when we see him now, with the long white locks flowing over his shoulders, his face gives one the impression of a deep thinker, a *savant*, whose hair has blanched in unceasing inward struggles, in severe and continued mental work.

A very clever man once permitted himself the unnecessary luxury of writing a very superficial book which bristles with untruths and unfounded judgments. This book was widely read and was called «*Der Christus-Mayr von H. Il'y*». It is maintained in this book that Mayr's thoughts never went «beyond his cows», that he was a man incapable of deep feeling, of fine expression, of high ideals. One has only to cast a single glance, I think, at this hoary, but youthful head with the furrowed brow of a thinker, to convince oneself that this man with the features of a Faust has more in him than a more superficial reporter ever dreamt of.

Has Wyl ever seen Christus-Mayr when he had finished his difficult part, and came out of the theatre trembling in every nerve, like a thoroughbred horse that has just won a race, with tears flowing, and such an intense expression of suffering and struggling that you almost imagined you saw the traces of blood still on his brow, incapable of speaking, incapable of resuming his ordinary everyday manner? Has he ever asked what this man, whose thoughts did not reach «beyond his cows», read in his leisure hours? Has he ever asked him about his sensations during the performance? I hardly think so.



Rosa Lang

Everyone in the village knows that Mayr, with all his goodness and natural manners, is a so-called «*schwieriger Charakter*», and those who know him are aware that his rôle has involved him in conflicts with his passionate nature, deeper than he himself cares to confess. It is just this that is so remarkable about Mayr. He was a brave soldier, a skilled athlete, a champion in the high-jump, in every respect a man who would, by nature, have suited the part of an Olympic combatant better than that of the suffering Nazarene. The way in which this man, at bottom a rough, strong nature, has transformed himself into the image of the «*Ecce Homo*» by the subduing influence of christian thought, of his inborn love of the pure and beautiful, is to me a most wonderful psychological process. It was this process which induced my mother to depict a similar figure in her book «*Am Kreuz*». Tobias Flunger acted his part with peculiar



Christus-Mayr (latest photo).
Photograph by B. Johannes, Partenkirchen.

Joseph Mayr

together. We cannot wonder that this man's hair has turned grey at an early period. How he was able, at the early age of twenty-seven, to so thoroughly portray the «suffering Christ», to render so vividly the expression of suffering, of majesty, and, why should I not say it, of *divinity*, has always appeared a miracle to me. With most of the Passion actors the secret of their success lies in the fact that their own characters correspond with those of the personages whom they represent. Mayr is one of the few with whom this was not the case. His great talent would enable him to play any part in a masterly manner. What appeals to

dignity and calm, and a noble majesty, but that was nothing so very exceptional, for his whole being and appearance was so thoroughly typical, and I do not think his peaceful soul was ever involved in any internal conflicts. But when a man like Mayr, *without* the typical head, *without* the necessary maturity, a man with all the passion of his race, is chosen for the task and performs it as Mayr has performed it in the four summers he has played, then it is heaven-born genius or a command of one's own nature bounding on self obliteration, or both

us in Mayr is genuine dramatic talent, wonderfully combined with intense individuality. For this reason, the defensive instinct of mankind as opposed to the conscious, dominant will of the «Son of God» is so wonderfully expressed in his «Christus». It is almost impossible to describe the way in which he portrayed, on the one hand, the immeasurable might and superiority of the Godhead, on the other hand the tender commiseration, the cry of a helpless, tortured, human heart. When we consider the beauty and dignity of his movements, the magnificent proportions of his figure we cannot but feel that it were an easy thing for this tall majestic form to tear itself loose, and in divine anger, swing the scourge over his tormentors, as he had done over the dealers in the Temple.

My remembrance of Mayr's «Christ» is uneradicable. I do not know in which part he is most effective, but I know that I have never seen a man act with so much soul and feeling, with so little sentimentalism as Mayr. Mayr was never a prude, — Wyl is quite right there, — but those who are better acquainted with him can safely say that this man, outwardly so simple and plain, is no everyday nature. To interviewers he is always rather reserved and official, and only says what he cares to have made public.

It is a good quality of the Ammergauers that they are very reticent to strangers, about their village and themselves. The people know well enough that every thoughtless, unconsidered word will be ruthlessly published by reporters, and consequently you can learn very little from the better class folk. But of course there are also discontented ones in Ammergau, and though few, still some, common elements; these were mostly the source of information for Wyl, who knew too little of the conditions of the place, to ascribe most of their talk to an evil mood or the influence of too much liquor. The information thus gathered was twisted into a distorted shape, rounded off with a few piquant journalistic turns, and blazed into the world as the pure, unadulterated truth.

I made the chance acquaintance of the clever author W. Wyl, six weeks before his death. He was suffering from dropsy, and had been given up by the doctors. I did my best to alleviate his sufferings and cheer him in his last days. I have forgiven him most of his literary sins — a very fair list — but «*Christus-Mayr*» is a book for which I cannot and will not forgive him. One can pardon a personal slight, but not a direct falsehood, a direct breach of the spirit of an ideal subject. Wyl wrote a beautiful book, «*Maitage in Oberammergau*» (May Days in Oberammergau), in which he does the Ammergauers full justice. How the same man could write such a miserably poor, totally untrue book as «*Christus-Mayr*» is incomprehensible to me. In his criticism of my mother's novel «*Am Kreuz*», he accuses her of having depicted the Ammergauers in a false light.

Now when a man, ignorant of Ammergau and Bavarian life altogether, comes over from America, stays for a few weeks in the Passion village and makes friends round the beer table with a few discontented actors, and then tells a lady who has made the Ammergauers her life-study, that her conception of the people is a false one, it really borders on the comic. Naturally the characters are not *photographically* true, the plot and the spiritual and mental pictures are pure invention. But that the mental level of the Ammergauers in my mother's book corresponds to the mental level of the better class Ammergauers will be admitted by all who are acquainted with them and their historic past. When Wyl says, he



Joseph Mayr as Christ (1870).

has seen these fellows daily in flannel shirts and rough coats, and puts that forth as a proof of their mental inferiority — I can only say, I have known them for twenty years in such costume, but where is it written that a flannel shirt and a rough coat preclude warmth of heart and noble sentiments? Wyl, the democrat and people's friend, ought above all to know that neither external appearances nor circumstances in life can diminish the true worth of a man.

When Wyl says: — «in their private life these people are really no idealists», then I

fail to see what idealism is. Certainly *conscious* idealists, so-called drawing-room idealists, they are not; not men who put themselves before you and exclaim emotionally: — I am an idealist». As long as I have known the Oberammergauers, I have never heard one of them speak of the sacrifices they have made for their native place. It is simply ridiculous when Wyl makes fun of the Ammergauers in «*Am Kreuz*» being able to understand foreign words. I do not see why a man like the *Bürgermeister*, who studies law, or Ludwig Lang, who reads the deepest philosophical works, should trip over a few foreign words which every Ammergau «*Gymnasiast*» brings back with him in the holidays. And



Joseph Mayr as Christ 1880).



Joseph Mayr as Christ (1870).

then with a man like Mayr, whose house was visited by people of all nationalities, and saw lords and ladies of the highest foreign aristocracy, even in the off season. If he had not sufficient divining power to guess the meaning of a few foreign words how did he converse with some of his visitors who knew hardly a word of German.

Besides, we must not forget that many Ammergauers are

prominent men in the outer world, and are in constant communication with their birthplace, visit their relatives and bring their own standard of education and refinement to the houses of their forefathers.

I think I have sufficiently proved that the Ammergauers do not occupy the low level which Wyl depicts when he speaks for example of «how those fellows bolt their food». I don't know where he made these studies; all those Ammergauers, whom my mother so frequently has as guests, eat just like any other well-bred men. Moderation in eating is one of the characteristic traits of the Ammergauer.

But I found it extremely small-minded when Wyl continually boasts of all he has done for the Passion Play, how he trained



Joseph Mayr as Christ (1870—71, 1880, 1890).



Ecce Homo. (Joseph Mayr.)

Rendl in his part, and helped Mayr, etc. And I cannot imagine how the Ammergauers, usually so conservative, could accept an outsider's ideas for a new cross, a cross that is not flat and broad like the old one, but thick and round, which racks the body that hangs on it to such an extent that, when it was tested for the first time, poor Mayr was removed unconscious from it. The broad, flat cross is far more in accordance with old tradition, we see it in nearly all the pictures of the Old Masters. Why on earth did the Ammergauers, who are so proud of their independence and old traditions, allow themselves to be talked over by a foreign journalist, who then went forth and told the world that he it was who had taught

this plain, uneducated folk common sense? My mother has been reproached with having over-estimated the Ammergauers in her work. But what are we to say when they are represented as common village boors, who sell the birthright of their mental independence, their idealism, for a «Kalbsbraten» (veal steak)!

Before his death, Wyl disavowed his work, and his family recalled the publication. How much false information has been spread abroad through its agency is an open question.

Family of "Christus-Mayr" in the year 1890.



Aloysia Mayr, now Frau Peter Rendl.	Christus-Mayr. Johanna Koch, born Mayr.	Dr. Otto Koch (died Nov. 1898). Rosa Mayr, died 1895. Frau Mayr (died 1899) with grandchild, Ella Koch.	Hans Mayr.
---	---	---	------------

To return to our veterans, after this slight digression induced by «Christus-Mayr».

In every-day life, Mayr is not only a genial and eminent personality, but is also of a practical and energetic disposition. With the help of his persevering wife he has raised himself from small beginnings to a comfortable and honourable position. In the year 1866 he took an active part in the campaign. In 1868 he married. Five children were born to him, of whom three are still living. A son, who is a capable musician and possesses a fine baritone voice and good

dramatic talent, which he unfortunately is not able to display, as he is usually engaged in the orchestra. In stature and appearance he much resembles his father. He is a very good carver, better than his father, who never attained to any particularly high standard in this branch. Of his two daughters, the eldest, a remarkably charming girl, became a widow two years ago. Her husband, the practitioner Dr. Otto Koch, succumbed to a severe illness brought about by overwork in his professional duties. She lives now only for her three little children, and her widowed father.



Christus-Mayr's House.

The other daughter, Aloysia, an excellent alto singer, is the wife of Peter Rendl, the «St. John» of this year's Passion Play. Mayr's home life was touchingly beautiful; he loved his wife most dearly, and was a good and thoughtfully considerate husband to her. To his children he was a strict but loving father, and I can well remember how, when the children's bedtime came, he used to make the sign of the Cross on their foreheads, and bless them. Mayr has also been for many years deputy *Bürgermeister*, and last year was put up as a candidate for *Bürgermeister*. But on this occasion he showed a noble trait of his character by taking up Lang's cause, which was threatened by strong and not always fair influences, and by inducing his supporters, regardless of his own interests, to elect the man who so well deserved the post.

Mayr is in every respect an unfathomable personality, overflowing with genuine artistic character, and full of paradoxes. He has a magnificent tenor voice, and you cannot imagine a heartier singer, a more jovial «Jodler» than he. And yet he is sometimes subject to fits of deep melancholy, such as only far-seeing and deep-feeling souls can know of. Capable of outbursts of violent temper, bounding almost on madness, he was, on the other hand the meekest soul in the world and a word could move him to tears. His wife knew full well of her husband's sudden changes of mood, and understood how to deal with him.

Now he has become more tranquil; life and its strict demands, combined with severe blows of fate, has smoothed down the conflicting forces of his nature. Mayr is now a man of fifty-seven years of age, and he has already celebrated his fifty-year jubilee as actor. As far back as 1850 he took part in the Play as one of the Jewish children, and his young days were passed at a time when Daisenberger directed the Passion Play. In 1860 he wished to play «St. John», but that year the rôle was given to Deschler, then thirty-eight years of age. In 1870 he was chosen as «Christus», and it was old Flunger, who, after the first rehearsal, stepped up to the nervous young novice, tapped him on the shoulder, and spoke the following few, but highly significant, words: — *Jetzt hast's g'wonnen, brauchst keine Angst mehr z'haben*. (You're alright, you need not be anxious.) How often

during the twenty years in which he played «Christ», has not Joseph Mayr hung on the Cross in rain and snow, often wet to the skin, in his thin «tricot», sometimes feverish through the cold, and racked by ear-ache and tooth-ache. And yet I believe he scarcely ever felt it. What were his physical sufferings compared to the wrestlings of his soul? I believe that, if Mayr had known that he would be taken down dead from the Cross the next time, he would still have played.

Now, the rôle of Prologue has been allotted to him, and he will carry it out nobly and beautifully, as he did that other rôle; we shall scarcely find a trace of the Crown of Thorns on his head, now hoary with age; we shall scarcely recognise anymore the form, which, in four «Passion» summers, has become the type of the Saviour to us.

Ranked according to age, Deschler,

nearly eighty years old, takes the first place among the veterans. He took part in the Passion Play for the first time in 1830 as one of the mob. In 1840 he was Herod's servant, in 1850 Lazarus, in 1860 St. John, in 1870—71 the High Priest Ezekiel, in 1880 he was Annas, a part which was taken from him, quite unnecessarily, in 1890, and given to a far inferior actor; this year he is again among the High Priests.

He is a tall, characteristic figure, and still overtops the other priests in the Council by a head's length. I believe that all through his life this man has only left his carving bench to go to church, or on extra-special occasions, such as an invitation or a parish meeting. Otherwise it may be said of him that he has worked from morning till night,



Sebastian Deschler as Ezekiel (1870).



Sebastian Deschler as Annas (1880).



Sebastian Deschler at his carving bench (1900).



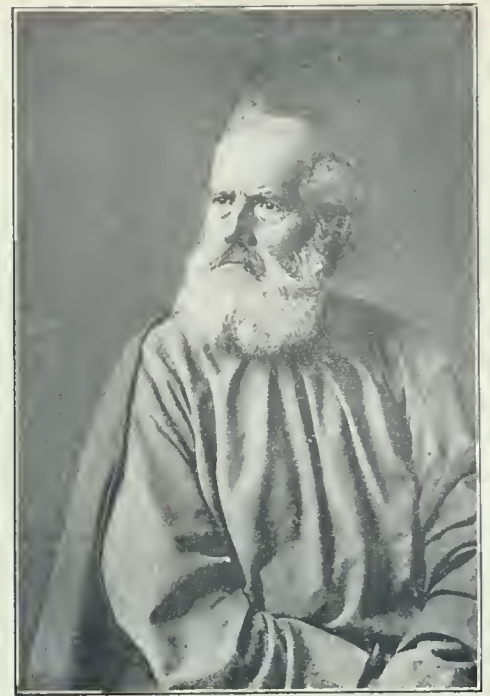
Jakob Hett as Peter (1870).

from earliest youth to old age, without having granted himself an hour's recreation. His numerous children, more than a dozen, have all inherited a talent for art. One son is a clever sculptor; another a good organist (in Landshut) and an accomplished violin player; a third, likewise a clever musician, was taken from him in his prime. Of the others, almost all have taken part in the Passion Play. In the year 1880 *nine* members of his family took part in the Play. Old Deschler occupies a prominent position among the carvers of Oberammergau. He is one of those who carve life-size figures, and who go

by the name of «*Holzbildhauer*». He has turned out some very fine church figures, and the «Manger» in the Church of St. Michael at Munich is said to be from his hand. One of old Deschler's best parts was his Melchisedek which he played in the *Kreuzerschule* in 1875. He has been on the church committee for about forty years, and is one of those rare men who make no enemies.

Just opposite to him lives his old friend and comrade, the old *Hett*, the «Peter» of past decades. On Sundays and holidays the two old fellows meet together and chat over things they have seen and gone through in the old days. Jakob Hett has played as «Peter» since 1860, and it is impossible to imagine a more typical head. He was like a figure out of an old altar picture. This year he can no longer take part on account of his high age and failing health.

Rendl, a masterly actor, has taken over his part. He who has seen Rendl as *Pilate*, the handsome, cultured Roman, or as *St. Udalrich* or a «*Meineidbauer*» will be satisfied that he will make a worthy *Peter*. The Rendl family comes from Tyrol, and on that account his grandfather was not allowed to perform in the Passion Play. His father was the first of the family who worked in the Play; he was also an eminent actor, played Nathaniel in 1820, Joseph of Arimathaea in 1830 and 1840, in 1850 one of the guards at the Grave, in 1860 a Pharisee, and was among the «folk» in 1870—71.



Jakob Hett as Peter (1890).



Jakob Hett at the carving bench (1900).

Thomas Rendl was Joseph of Arimathaea in 1860 and 1870, and distinguished himself by his fine acting. In 1880 he was Pilate, as also in 1890, and now he is Peter. Rendl is one of the most sympathetic of the Passion performers.



Thomas Rendl as Pilate (1880).

Her; the good Rendl was so deeply engrossed in his part that for months his features were cast in a tragic mould. Certainly he played the part eventually in a manner worthy of the greatest actors.

Then there is the old Steinbacher, the Nicodemus of bygone days. For six years he occupied the post of first *Bürgermeister*, and for nearly thirty years that of second, or deputy *Bürgermeister*. He is an extremely kind-hearted and peace-loving man, and he acted with marvellous feeling and skill. He was the village dyer, and his hands were usually the colour of the dye that was most in use at the moment. But his fine old face with the gentle, kindly eyes, and the shrewd

His son acts this year, as in 1890, the part of St. John. Rendl always speaks perfect, but rather harsh sounding High German, with a strong Tyrolese accent, and he has a curiously ceremonious and dignified manner. Hard working and persevering, he has lived all his life in direst poverty, but he has always maintained his inward dignity and high ideals of right and wrong. He is a man of honour in the true sense of the word. He has had the misfortune to lose his poor little wife, whom he had tended with the most loving care. Rendl learns his parts with great difficulty. When he was studying his part as the «*Meineidbauer*» for the «practice theatre», my mother, whom he usually accompanies in her winter walks, could not for a long time understand his changed and brooding manner, nor the expression of a guilty conscience on his face. Only after several weeks was it clear to



Thomas Rendl (the present Peter) as Joseph of Arimathaea (1870).



Thomas Rendl at work, in his living-room (1900).



Franz Steinbacher as Nicodemus, 1890 (1869—75 Bürgermeister).

intellectual expression, makes you take to the old man at once. This year he plays as Simon of Bethany, almost certainly his last rôle, for very few over eighty years of age take a part in the Play. Among the musicians we also come across a couple of old gentleman, who have already celebrated their 50-year jubilees.

One is Andreas Bierling, nearly eighty years of age, who plays first violin in the church and in the Play. He is also what is known as an «*Allerweltsbastler*» (Jack of all trades). If a lamp goes wrong and refuses to burn properly, or if a table is to be decorated with flowers, or if a musical instrument is damaged, old Bierling can put everything straight. Another musician, who celebrated his jubilee at the



Franz Steinbacher as Nicodemus (1880).

same time as Bierling, is old Heinrich Zwink, a brother of the late tenor, Eduard Zwink, already mentioned among the past actors in the Passion Play. He is a master in fruit growing, and has a splendid orchard and fruit-garden. As a man of nearly seventy years he still blows the first horn. When these two celebrated their jubilee in the year 1896, together with Johannes Diemer, they each received from Frau von Hillern a fine beer mug and the following little poem:



Franz Steinbacher at home.



Andreas Bierling.

*Den Drei Jubelgreisen:
Johannes Dicmer, Heinrich Zwiink und
Andreas Bierling gewidmet zum
12. Januar 1896 von W. v. Hillern.*

*Wir grüssen Euch, Ihr Jubelgreise
Mit Festesgruss und Feierklang,
Die Ihr in künstlerischer Weise
Gewirkt ein halb' Jahrhundert lang!*

*Den Ruhm, den Ihr Euch habt errungen
Mit edler Kunst und reinem Sinn,
Ist in die Welt hinausgedrungen,
Weit, über Meer und Länder hin.*

*Doch was das Beispiel von Euch, Allen.
Im heimischen Kreis die Jugend lehrt:
Das mütliche Zusammenhalten,
Wo Jeder sich im Ganzen ehrt —*

*Der Einheit fester Grundgedanke,
Er leht der Zukunft Licht und Glanz
Und webt der Hoffnung grüne Ranke
In Eures Alters Ehrenkranz!*

*Gestattet, dass ich Euch dies sage —
Und trinkt mit mir, der fremden Frau
An dem erinnerungsreichen Tage —
Auf unser alles Ammergan!*

A worthy man in the truest sense of the word is old *Martin Oppenrieder*, who this year for the first time performs the part of Annas. During the Passion summers of 1880 and 1890 he acted Joseph of Arimathaea, whose infinite tenderness and loving care at the «Descent from the Cross» won the hearts of all. When the Body of the Crucified One is loosened from the cross and Oppenrieder takes it upon his shoulders saying

«*Süsse, heilige Bürde
komm auf meine
Schulter*» (Oh sweet,
Oh holy Burden, rest
upon my shoulders!),
the audience was on
each occasion deeply
moved. When we
consider how often
those engaged in the
scene of the Descent
from the Cross must
repeat this difficult
task, without its ap-
pearing mechanical, it
may perhaps be ac-
counted for from the
fact that the under-



Martin Oppenrieder as Joseph of Arimathaea 1880 and 1890.



Martin Oppenrieder and his wife
in the Costume of the year 1840.

taking is one of great responsibility, for if the performer who takes the part of «Christ», hanging for the space of twenty minutes on the Cross, with out-stretched arms, is removed too hurriedly or without the proper precautions, the sudden movement may bring on apoplectic fit. Thus this anxious care with which the Body of the Crucified One is handled is also in reality a necessary measure. A most important personage, although no performer, is the parish-treasurer Gustav Hohenleitter; a man, who has administered this highly responsible office most creditably during the last three Passion Plays.

I think now I have remembered all those, who this year have had to give up their parts or at least considerably reduce them — also all the brave veterans who, their whole life long, have faithfully devoted themselves to the sacred cause. Thanks be given to all those who have contributed towards the great work, and who have steadfastly devoted their utmost energies to the same! We can promise them that they shall never be forgotten, even when their powers no longer permit them to fill important parts. They have by their work scattered seeds of holiness which will strike root and flourish through all time and eternity.





Oberammergau and the Passion Theatre 1900.

Oberammergau of To-Day.

When the Passion pilgrim lets his glance rove over the Passion village for the first time, he will at once confess — provided that he has not arrived in pouring rain, swerving through the rough streets in a closed carriage — that it has a decidedly charming, idyllic situation.

He is greeted by the mountains with their dark fir-trees, by the sunny meadows, through which the crystal-clear Ammer flows like a dark blue ribbon, by the tall church tower and the peaceful little cemetery, by the smart houses with their neat gardens. On such a warm, bright summer's day everything breathes peace and happiness and the pilgrim's heart swells in expectation of the heavenly peace which shall flow into his soul from the Passion Play.

There are many houses which have decked themselves in town array, and simple village inns which have changed into pretentious hotels and Pensions, for the modest Ammergauer is not aware that he is far more attractive to the stranger in his own interesting individuality than through his attempts to cope with international intercourse. But there are also many plain, simple, genuine Ammergau houses where rules the motto «my house is my castle» and which invite the stranger to enter within their homely walls.

And when the visitor sees the fine shops, and the products of the art-industry piled up in the magnificent show-rooms of Georg Lang sel. Erben or in the more modest ones of Zwink, Schilcher, Josef Mayr, Veit, etc., he gets an inkling of the intimate connection existing between the production of these beautiful, plastic works of art and the representation of the Passion Play. The Crucifixes and Madonnas, on which the eye rests with pleasure, the thousand objects great and small which Ammergau art and Ammergau industry have produced, they form a congenial transition to the greater plastic element of the Passion Play.

I have already spoken of the development of the Ammergau carving industry in the historical part. We have seen how the carving industry in Oberammergau first emanated from the convent of Rottenbuch, and how later the intercourse with Augsburg and Nuremberg, and the decoration of Ettal church by artists from these towns, helped enormously in furthering the Ammergau carving trade. But the Ammergauers did not confine themselves solely to woodcarving. The carved subjects were painted, an art they learned from the Augsburgers; figures were modelled and embossed in wax, clay, and plaster, and a busy trade was done in boldly painted, sacred pictures, and in amulets. We saw then how the rise of the Grödnern industry at the end of the 18th century, the opening up of new trade routes, and above all the continual disturbances through war, rendered a quiet, peaceful development impossible. During these disturbed times they abandoned real art, and took to carving soldiers and battle-pieces. The *Verleger* Georg Lang constructed a mechanical model with moving soldiers, — representing the siege and capture of the fortress of Scharnitz, — which was bought by King Max I, but was then lost, and the artist had to make another one which was presented to Napoleon I, but which came back again after the defeat of the French, and is now in the possession of the Lang firm. The simplicity of the general taste at that time, and the decline of religious faith lead to a depression in religious art and carving. Only ordinary plain crucifixes and pilgrim articles were now produced. Certain of the Ammergauers, for instance, Georg Lang, took to peddling again; others, like his son, Joh. Ev. Lang, visited the big fairs and tried to find new markets for their wares. Toys, turned out wholesale, were chiefly sold at the fairs, and sold rapidly. Among the finer things were busts of celebrities, copies of monuments, miniature figures in costume, groups, then pipe bowls, chessmen etc., such as Ludwig Steub describes in 1840. But they had already commenced to make larger figures again, «Mangers» were carved, and one Hyacinth Reiner is specially mentioned as being a skilled workman. Glass-painting on the other hand fell completely into decay. The altar painter, Matthias Lang, and his son removed to Munich, and the last representatives of the dying wax-embossing industry, were Andreas and Josef Bierling. Already in the twenties, Unhoch had founded a school of drawing, which, as far as circumstances allowed, was always conducted by capable teachers. In 1836 Johann Ev. Lang formed the already mentioned «*Lukasverein*» which aided sick members and generally advanced the welfare of the carving industry. The rules were strict, and boys had to study three years and pass an examination before they were recognised as regular independent workmen. In the year 1837 a hundred and sixty persons were employed in woodcarving in Oberammergau, not including the women and children. But the uncertainty of the times reduced the carving industry to a very low ebb, in spite of all endeavours on the part of the *Verleger* Lang; and many carvers had to turn day-labourers in order to earn their bread. In the 'fifties the art advanced again with the Passion Play, and all kinds of fretwork articles, carved fancy goods, figures, groups, animals, and knick-knacks were manufactured.

At this time, the *Verleger* being ill and his eldest son dead, the son-in-law, Christian Stuffer, in Baden-Baden, a born Grödnern, took over the business. The annual turn-over of the firm of Stuffer and Binder alone amounted to 80—100 000 Marks. This rapid and paying work was the ruin of the carving art in Ammergau. Every one who had a pair of hands occupied himself in the wholesale production of

fancy goods. But they soon over-reached themselves; the market was flooded with that kind of article, the public taste changed, and the goods lay useless. The Ammergau warehouses were crammed with unmarketable goods; the *Verleger* had to make enormous sacrifices to keep things going. Then during their prosperity the carvers had refused the help of the government, which had offered to erect and support a school of carving. This piece of short-sightedness soon made itself felt; the government created a dangerous rival in the carving school at Partenkirchen.

In their distress, it was again one of the community's own members who saved them. In the middle of the 'seventies the community had founded a small carving and modelling school, and it was again an Ammergauer, who had the strength and self-denial, not to say heroism, to refuse far better offers from outside, content himself with a post in the school of modelling and carving, with a salary of 1200 marks yearly. The school had to be conducted in his own house, for at that time no other room could be had. For near-



Oberammergau Pedlar (*Kra.enträger*)
of the year 1830.



Ludwig Lang, Director of the Carving-School.
Stage-Manager for the Tableaux.

ly thirty years has this little man, with the clear-cut, intelligent features, with military rigour yet tender heart, struggled and worked for his native place, and finally raised it to a level of real artistic merit. Ludwig Lang, son of old Andreas Lang, studied art in the academy at Munich, and acquired his professional training in Mayr's art workshops, and with Prof. Sickinger in Munich. In 1870—71 he was at the wars and was present at the battle of Sedan. Since his return to his native home he has been the arranger of the *tableaux vivants* in the Passion Play. How he commands, sometimes two or three hundred beings, with a movement of his hand, a glance from his eye, and in a few minutes conjures up a magnificent, harmonious picture out of the difficult material of untrained woodcutters and farm hands, must appear a miracle to anyone who has once seen the Tableaux. How many of those

collected at the Passion Play know to whom they owe these beautifully harmonised colours, the picturesque grouping.

Few men enjoy such universal respect as the Herr *Vorstand* (President). Not only as arranger of the living pictures, but also as president of the volunteer fire-brigade and the carving school, he enjoys unbounded authority, and I should not advise even the most daring to dispute this authority. He is in every respect a fine-feeling, sensitive, artistic nature; an excellent designer, well trained technically, a highly capable schoolmaster, never at a loss to meet the demands of modern art, open to advancement in all branches of knowledge and never resting on his laurels.

His knowledge of literature is considerable, and there are few modern poets or philosophers of note whose works he has not read. Perhaps the following aphorisms, taken from this modest man's note book, may interest the reader; the permission to publish them was only obtained with the greatest trouble.

I.

Und wenn die Welt dir Wunden schlug
Bist von Freunden verlassen und betrogen —
Wenn Dich umgibt der Menschen Trug
Dein Ideal in den Koth Dir g'zogen —
O bleibe treu dem Guten und dem Schönen,
O schwanke nicht, bleib selbst Dir treu! —
Die Andern nicht, — dich selbst — mußt du
versöhnen,
Nur so erstelst Dir Lebensfreud auf's Neu!

I.

And if the world has wounded thee,
Art by thy friends forsaken, and forlorn —
If man's deceit surroundeth thee,
And thy ideats are laughed to scorn —
O faithful be to all that's good and fair,
Swerre not, unto thyself be always true!
Not others — but thyself — must thou forbear.
For only thus arise life's joys anew!

III.

Antike Kunst ist für uns die in Stein gehauene Geschichte der vom Kampfplatz des Lebens abgetretenen Nationen.

(Antique art is for us a history hewn in stone, the history of nations departed from life's arena).

III.

Ihr seht nur die Wellen
Den zischenden Schaum
Die Kraft, die sie bewegt,
Die ahnt ihr kaum!

*Ye see but the waves
And the hissing foam,
But scarce dream of the force
That drives them along! **

IV.

Was ist Wahrheit? Sag es — und der gebildete, wie der ungebildete Pöbel wird dich strengen.
(*What is truth? Speak it, — and the learned and the unlearned alike will stone thee.*)

V.

Wage nie aus Deinem Innersten herauszugehen, denn Neid, Bosheit und Unverstand stehen Wache und fallen vereint über Dich her.

(Never venture to desert thy inmost soul, for envy, malice and ignorance stand watch, and will fall upon thee).

VI.

Die Hände, welche Socrates den Schierlingsbecher reichten, Christus an's Kreuz schlugen und Saronarola's Scheiterhaufen schürten, sind auch heute noch geschäftig.

(The hands, which proffered Socrates the poisoned cup, struck Christ on the Cross, and stirred Saronarola's funeral pile, are still at work to-day).

VII.

Es gibt Charaktere, die einer inneren zwingenden Notwendigkeit gehorchend, trotz Misskennung, Undank und Verdächtigung, stets ihre Kräfte der Förderung allgemeiner Angelegenheiten widmen. Jede neu hervortretende Aufgabe reisst sie wieder mit sich fort, wenn sie sich auch von vorneherein des grossen Undankes derer, für die sie arbeiten, sicher sind. — Die rohe, gedankenlose Masse, die sich zunächst aus den Halbgebildeten rekrutirt, kann eine derartige Selbstlosigkeit nicht fassen und wittert darum, hinter jeder Leistung irgend eine selbstsüchtige Absicht.

(There are certain characters, which in obedience to an inward commanding necessity, in spite of misconception, ingratitude, and distrust, continually dedicate their powers to the advancement of general affairs. Every new task absorbs their interests, even though they are certain, from the very beginning, of ingratitude from those for whom they work. — The raw, unreasoning crowd, mostly recruited from among the ranks of the half-educated, cannot conceive such unselfishness, and spies behind every act some selfish motive).

Ludwig Lang is happily married to a sister of the postmaster and *Verleger*, Guido Lang. Let us hope that his promising young son will also prove a blessing, directly or indirectly, to his birth-place.

Since the end of the 'eighties, the Carving school has been supported by the State, and the government lent financial aid towards the erection of the same. L. Lang has found an able drawing-master in his former pupil, Anton Lechner, Drawing, carving, burnt-wood work, modelling in clay and wax, and other branches of industrial art are taught here. Articles made in the school are not allowed to be sold. The postmaster, Lang, has erected some fine studios, where the young carvers can turn what they have learnt at school to practical account.

I have spoken so often of the Langs and their intellectual influence in Oberammergau that I had almost forgotten to devote

a few words to their present chief. I should like to give a few facts concerning the whole family.

There is something mysterious about an old family house, that has stood for over two centuries. I maintain that houses too have their fates, and where the spirit of unison and piety has once entered a house, it remains there for all



Anton Lechner, Drawing-master.



Georg Lang.

time, and exerts its influence over each generation. And the blessings of a beautiful, intimate family life are not confined to a narrow circle, they spread over the whole community.

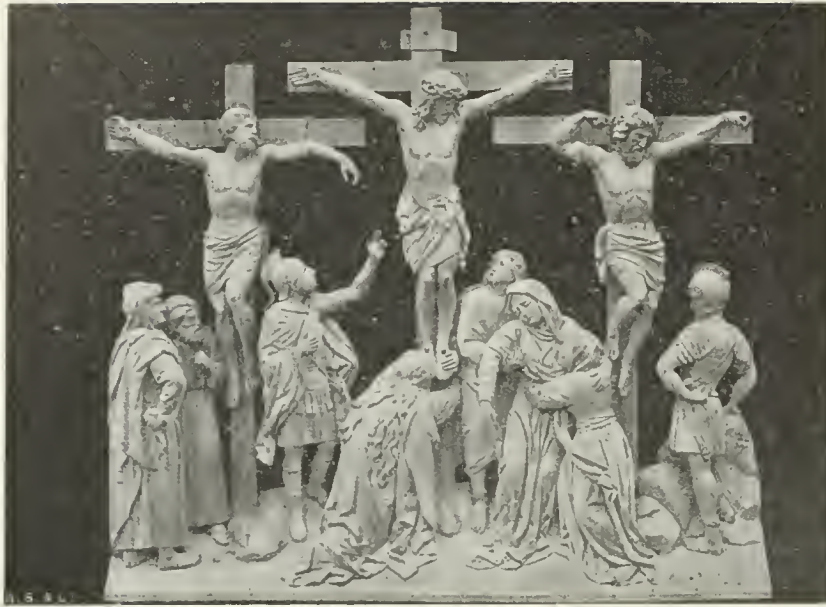
In such a house everything has its traditional place. Like in the Viking's Halls of old, there is the seat of honour, on which the grey-haired chief of the family is enthroned, at whose feet stand love and respect, tenderness and care.

And such a house is that of Georg Lang sel. Erben.

When the predecessor of the present post-master and *Verleger* exchanged the old «Klepperhaus» for the present house, a particularly



Wood Carving Studio of the Firm Georg Lang sel. Erben.



Crucifixion Group from the Studio of the Firm Georg Lang sel. Erben.

lucky star seems to have been in the ascendant, for since that time many a storm has raged round the old house but has never shaken that which the family prizes most — the inborn sense of kinsmanship, the spirit of order, peace and concord, of mutual respect and forbearance. It is an exclusive house, such as becomes a patrician family; not open to all and sundry. But he who is once received into its

circle, is under its spell for life.

The present grey-haired head of the house and family is the highly respected Therese Lang, the sister of the *Bürgermeister*. For many years she was the soul of the business, and I still remember the time when the characteristic face of the old lady was daily to be seen behind the wire screen which divided off a part of the living room as a private office. When I was recently up there the screen had been removed, and a feeling of sadness came over me at seeing the inroads that modern demands are making into these sacred old rooms. Fräulein Lang has now left most of the business management to younger hands. — Of the three daughters, two are married; one to the *Vorstand* L. Lang, the other to the *Verleger* Veit; and of the three sons, two are abroad. But the house is not empty on that account; the daughters bring their husbands and children to the old home, — eleven years ago the remaining son, Guido Lang, lead home a charming, clever wife, and his fair-haired little daughter now grows up in the lap of the family — and the other sons frequently return to their native hearth, like swallows to their nest. The eldest brother, Hugo, a respected man of business in Liverpool, is going to spend this year's *Passion* with his grown-up children, amidst the scenes of his youth; nor has the youngest son, Capt. Eduard Lang, found any place better or fairer in the wide world than the spot on which his cradle stood.

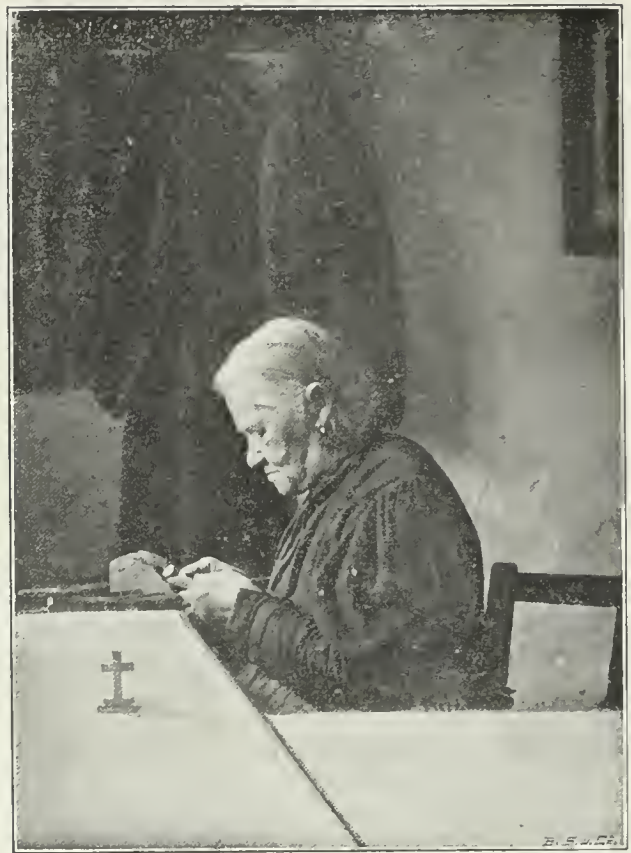
The soul of the post office is Fräulein Ida Lang, the *«Schalterlöwin»* (lioness of the counter) as she is often called in fun. She is possessed of great goodnature and masculine energy, superintends the young people in the Despatching Office, and at home is the practical spirit in all things.

Guido Lang, and his active wife are treading faithfully in the footsteps of their forefathers, and take every opportunity to increase the welfare of the community, to advance its industry, culture, and importance. I still remember quite well out of my own experience the time when the carving industry was at a very low ebb, and only the firm J. G. Lang sel. Erben continued to give work without

hope of profit, and paid the carvers in ready money the whole time. That ensured the power of the house of Lang — every Ammergauër knows that it is a solid bulwark, which worthily represents Ammergau industry and trade, and that all that it achieves in prosperous times, flows as life-blood in the veins of the community, that it is the heart which supplies the Ammergau industry with healthy blood.

May the house of Georg Lang sel. Erben long continue in the old spirit as an abode of peace and love and blessing for itself and for Ammergau!

At present there are about 138 male, and 11 female carvers employed in Ammergau, of which 56 men and 3 women are carvers of «Christ» figures. Of general figure carvers there are 31 male and 1 female; animal carvers, 5 men; ornamental carvers, 18 men and 2 women; 3 men and 5 women are employed in toy-making. There are four painters, eighteen carpenters and joiners, and three turners. When we consider however that most of the women and bigger children assist in the work, we see that by far the greater majority of the village inhabitants are employed in carving. Most of the carvers have their own little property, with a few cows, and meadow and pasturage. The



The oldest Woman Carver of Crucifixes, Therese Lang, née Lang, Widow Lang and remarried Lang, Mother of the Rabbi Andreas Lang. Known by the name of "*Musslthoma*".



A typical Scene. Mother and Children at work.



The Woodcarvers' Midday Meal.

Ammergauers are not poor in the current sense of the word, the absolute poverty and begging of the big towns is a great rarity in Ammergau. But they are also far from being wealthy. The needs and wants of the people are the simplest imaginable. The large sums which the Passion Play brings into the village are almost all absorbed in parish undertakings. Ammergau has been burdened with so many debts, so much distress and misery, that up to well in the 'eighties the receipts from the Passion Play were much like drops of water falling in the Sahara. How much has not been required to repair damages done by the floods, to regulate the wild Laine, to erect public buildings, to maintain the carving school, etc. I will not bore the reader with dry figures. *Lehrer Feldigl* and others give good statistic information in their Guides; I only repeat that the individual Ammergauer receives infinitely little for all his trouble and bother during the Passion Play. To satisfy



A Woodcarver's Home. (Anton Mayr.)



A procession in Oberammergau.

are swindled by unscrupulous tradespeople, and you will understand that the individual earnings from the «Passion» cannot be particularly brilliant. The actors are very badly paid. Part of the surplus is divided among the six to seven hundred players; of this, the «Christus» in 1890 received two thousand marks (£ 100)! And supposing an actor has a small sum left after paying his debts, the usual consequence of the strain and worry during the summer is illness and incapacity for work, and often enough, not only must his hard earned savings be broken into, but he must sell his hardly acquired «Passion» furniture again at half its value. And yet woe to him, who does not, with his whole soul, make every sacrifice for the Play! Though a few perhaps of the Ammergauers are slightly infected with the spirit of speculation, yet the vast majority is imbued with the fanaticism of the genuine old Passion spirit. He will be glad if he earns something, of course, for he has his business and his family to maintain, and he never knows what misfortunes the next ten years may not bring him, but like his forefathers he would play, if necessary, just as well, without wages, without hope of material gain. The need for artistic occupation, for intellectual pleasures, is so strong in the Ammergauers, that it far outweighs material interests. For this reason two elements are always to be found in their habits and customs, — the religious and the artistic; often both combined. As in earlier times religious fêtes, such as processions with pictorial representations, dramatic performances, and so on, were chiefly the order of the day, so now the Ammergauer is always to the fore in all religious functions. On important feast-days, particularly fine masses are sung in the church. On All Saints' Day the musicians perform a magnificent Requiem, and a procession is made to the graves. On the Feast of St Cecilia, the musicians give a concert, and at Christmastide or Epiphany a «Manger» or «Christmas» Play is nearly always given by the children or adults. The old catholic spirit of religious peace still hovers over the village, and the roughest lad takes his hat off in the inn when he hears the bell, which proclaims the angels' greeting to earth. On the night of the last Thursday but one before Christmas, the so-called «Knöpflesnacht», the children go from house to house singing carols, and say: «*I bitt Enk um an Oklopfat*» (Please give me an »Oklopfat«). This old custom is in remembrance of how Joseph and Mary went from house to house on Christmas Eve and knocked everywhere in

the demands of the visitors, the people have to procure a quantity of things

which must be paid for after the «Passion», with interest.

Consider in addition that during the «Passion» summer scarcely any Ammergauer is able to get to regular work, that the price of food is higher, that many of the inexperienced people

vain. It was probably formerly called *Klöpflsnacht* from *«an-klopfen»* (to knock).

A beautiful custom is the *Sterngehen* (carrying the Star) by the musicians on New-Year's Eve. Carrying the glowing Star on a long pole, they form a procession, and stop before every house to sing in the clear, frosty air, an old carol which proclaims to the world how the three kings came from afar to see the miracle in the lowly manger at Bethlehem. And how the voices ring out through the winter night, away over the steep



«When the Vesper Bell is ringing».

walls of the Kofel, at the foot of which a red light glimmers through the snow-decked trees, like a ray of love from the heart of the holy Mother of Grace — the listening boys must be strangely impressed by it all.

Nineteen hundred years have flown since then, and kings and wise men, rich and poor, still flock to see the child that once rested in the manger and has now become the King of the world. At that time there were only *three* kings, now all the princes and people of the earth come to see His prototype, since they cannot see Him in person



«Good health all round».

any more. And something of the sacred mission which it has to fulfil dawns upon the Ammergau child, of the memory of the Saviour which it must tend and cherish, and no more allow to die out than the little red light on the Kofel.

A pretty custom, — not confined to Ammergau alone, but fairly general in Upper Bavaria, and probably a survival from heathen times, — is the collection of *Seelenzotten* (holy cakes) by the children, who, on the morning of All Saints' Day, go through the village with



Carol Singers carrying the «Star».

sacks, and crying: *Ich bitt' Euch um ein Seckle Zölta* (Please give me a cake), collect bread, sweets, and small coin.

Otherwise, but few of the old customs have been retained. Superstitious, middle-age practices have, as far as I know, never existed in Ammergau. The influence, which the shrewd and enlightened Benedictines of Ettal disseminated, removed the last remnants of dark, mediaeval superstition.

A mischievous trick, which was frequently played in former times, but has now almost entirely ceased, was the making of a so-called *Maiweg* (May path). If there was a woman in the place whose connection with a friend did not quite



Wedding Procession in Oberammergau.

meet the approval of the parish, and was not perhaps in keeping with strict morality, there appeared suddenly, as if by magic, on the eve of the 1st of May, from the house of the one party to that of the other, a black path, strewn with cinders and ashes. In spite of all precautions, the invisible authors could never be discovered, but it is certain that we have here a piece of folk-justice like the *Haberfeldtreiben* .*)

At weddings most of the old usages are still in force, and they are celebrated with special pomp if the party in question happens to belong to the privileged order of the musicians.

At six o'clock in the morning, the first serenade takes place before the bride's house, where the bridegroom comes and fetches away his elect. This is called the *«Morgenstern»*. Then the whole company repairs to the inn, to eat

*) A kind of popular justice, by which a disguised mob holds up to public ridicule, by a mock serenade etc., immoral persons not easily to be reached by the law — *Flügel*. —

the «*Morgensuppe*», a soup containing maccaroni and sausages. When this has been eaten with all due solemnity, they proceed in an orderly procession to the registry office, where *Bürgermeister* Lang in a spirited, good-humoured speech performs the civil ceremony; thereupon they go to the church, still in procession, the bride with her «*Kranzjungfrauen*», the bridegroom with his «*Kranzjungherren*».

During the ceremony, immediately after the reading of the gospel, they make their offering, that is to say the whole company passes round behind the High Altar and lays its obolus on the four offering-plates, for which, during a second procession round the altar at the close of the service, each partaker receives a sip of white wine from the priest. Then they return from church, the bridal pair together, and several young lads start a race which finishes at the young couple



Wedding in Oberammergau.

coming out of church. They now betake themselves to the almost never-ending wedding breakfast, where a dance is gone through between every course, and it is no light duty to have to uninterruptedly dance and eat from midday until late in the evening. Of course each dance has its fixed, prescribed method of performance. There is the «*Herzklopper*», which is danced only by the two lovers, then the «*Ehrentanz*», which the «*Ehrmutter*» and the «*Ehrvater*», the «*Kranzjungherren*» and the «*Kranzjungfrauen*», and the young married couple dance with one another, and so on.

That a master of ceremonies is necessary on these occasions is obvious, and it is our good Rendl. Rendl is not only carver, packer, carrier, and marker at the shooting-range, but also the village «Master of the Ceremonies», who at weddings has the by no means easy task of settling the order of rank; and with what inimitable dignity he does it, only he who has seen him can form an idea. Infinitely touching is it when at the end of the wedding breakfast he rises in his short little brown coat — he has never attained to a black suit, I believe — to give the traditional «*Abdanken*». In a well turned speech he first thanks the guests,



Playfellows in Oberammergau.

in the name of the bridal couple, for their participation in the ceremony, calling each one by name and rank and according to the part he has played at the wedding; then he thanks the bride and bridegroom in the name of the guests, conveys to them the goodwishes of all present, and at the close asks God's blessing for the newly

married pair, and offers up a prayer in which all join.

Curiously enough the mothers of the bridal couple do not attend the marriage ceremony, but the god-mother is usually chosen as «*Ehrenmutter*», and if the bridegroom's father is no longer living, the «*Döhl*» or god-father takes his place as «*Ehrenvater*». This custom is based on a very practical circumstance;

it is a pity that it is not more general. The united couple themselves do not pay for the whole breakfast, but each guest takes his share in the expenses. When the «*Abdanken*» is over, the so-called «*Weisen*» begins — Rendl asks every guest to pay six marks to the «*Brautpersonen*». Whoever wishes to give more, is humbly invited to do so. The bride puts the gifts, neatly wrapped in paper, on a concealed plate, and the young husband offers the donors a glass of red wine, the young wife hands each a biscuit. Naturally not only money, but presents of all kinds are

given. This important business over, the real fun begins. The mothers, more distant relations, friends, and acquaintances now arrive, and dancing is in full swing until midnight, when the young pair are «trumpeted»

home by the musicians. The next day is the so-called «golden day». First of all a mass is held for the deceased relatives of the young couple, then aft-

er church they both go to the inn to pay for the wedding breakfast, which usually draws out to a long visit, followed perhaps by visits to other inns, so that the young people do not really belong to each other until the third day. Such are the chief features of an Ammergau wedding.

An active club life exists in Ammergau. There are «Odd-fellows'» gym-



Two Ammergau Schoolboys.



Oberammergau Children.

nastic, and choral Societies, and a Chess Club, founded at my mother's instigation, under the chairmanship of the sculptor Paul Mayer, a brilliant chess player, and the management of the wellknown chess champion *Lehrer* Huber of Unterammergau. The young people are very keen on the game, which keeps them away from rough and trivial amusements, and trains their minds to higher aims. The fine concerts and theatrical performances, held by the above

mentioned Societies, have in view, besides social amusement, the discovery and testing of young talent for the Passion Play. The practice theatres (*Übungs-theater*), usually run in summer, under the management of the *Bürgermeister*, also serve this purpose. They have therefore more importance for the player than the spectator imagines. From a well acted part in the practice theatre many a future Christus, or Caiaphas or Judas has been foretold. Even the children are trained to take part in small plays at Christmas and other festivals, and you will rarely find such pretty, graceful children as in Ammergau. It must lie partly in the race, partly in the artistic temperament of the parents, that the Ammergau child has such a peculiar charm, such a lively intelligence and artistic talent.

Our publisher, Herr Schnell, has succeeded in taking a number of delightful little groups.



A merry Trio.

Winter life in Ammergau is glorious.

When the people below are enveloped in a thick fog like a grey cloak, so that the oppressed lungs can scarcely breathe, up there in Ammergau the sky is a bright, deep blue, and the snow-covered peaks stand out in relief, dazzling white, as if worked in silver. Long, transparent icicles hang from the roofs and pine branches, glittering in the sun like prisms. At midday it is often so warm that you can sit out in the open, and not unfrequently spring flowers have been found on the Bichl in December and January.

But when the frost has properly set in, when the air trembles with the glittering ice crystals, then the mountains show signs of life, and echo with strange noises. There, there is a crashing like breaking beams; there, in the rocky ravine, a roar like thunder; there again, a sharp, clear sound like the grinding of steel. Is it the frost-giants of Edda struggling against the might of Spring — is it the «*Götterdämmerung*»?

No, it is only the wood coming down to the valley. Over the steep walls of the Kofel, in the frozen channels of the watercourses, the mighty stems rush down with thundering roar, bringing rocks and stones with them.

Highly piled sledges slide down from the Sonnenberg, and other mountains with good paths. The felled trees are brought down on heavy sledges drawn by horses and provided with powerful brakes, or on light hand-sledges on which the men ride merrily down to the valley. It is then either thrown into the Ammer which carries it to its destination, or stacked up on the spot.

That is the time when the natural man gets his due rights, when art and culture are forgotten in the fierce struggle with the elements. Not only the woodcutters — many a carver, who all through the year has been sitting in his room, must up the mountain and exert every muscle to gather in the harvest which has ripened for him on the high, stoney ground of his rocks. And how their eyes flash, their cheeks glow, how the muscles harden, and how the crisp air expands the lungs — how hair and beard are covered with ice so that the men look like the forest giants which they bring to the valley.

Of course, accidents sometimes happen. Some years ago a sledge overturned and crushed Christus-Mayr's foot. But when you see the merry, chattering and jodelling groups, as they return at twilight, the axe over the shoulder, to their cheerful hearths — you feel that Nature is the fertile soil from which the Ammergauer derives all his best powers. That is the great, enviable advantage that the Ammergau artist has over his town colleague, that he can never become a degenerated product of culture or one-sided art tendencies. Whatever vanities and superficialities may have settled on the simple artist during the Passion summer, they are all blown away again by the strong wind of such winter days; and in the wintry forest his impressionable soul receives an undefinable idea of the Eternal. He cannot express the sad yet delightful sensation which fills his breast with power and longing, — but when evening comes, and the tired men meet together to practise some classic composition or chorus, they suddenly feel that there *is* a way of expressing that which the omnipotent teacher has taught them up in the mountains. That is the great secret of the Ammergauer's success, this intercourse between Art and Nature, which will be imperishable; for it is the breath of Eternity which animates it.

The winter day has drawn to an end — the sun has long since disappeared behind the Kofel. On the dark branches of the fir trees the glittering icicles shine like silver in the moonlight. The Nothkar is so brilliantly illuminated, that you can see every crevice — it looks like an enormous, burnt-out crater. On the venerable head of the Kofel, the cross glistens in the moonlight. A slight mist floats up from the valley, like a gauzy veil. From the «Lourdes grotto» the red light sends out its rays, and from the village come muffled sounds of life. A mood comes over us like that which gave rise to Frau von Hillern's beautiful little poem:

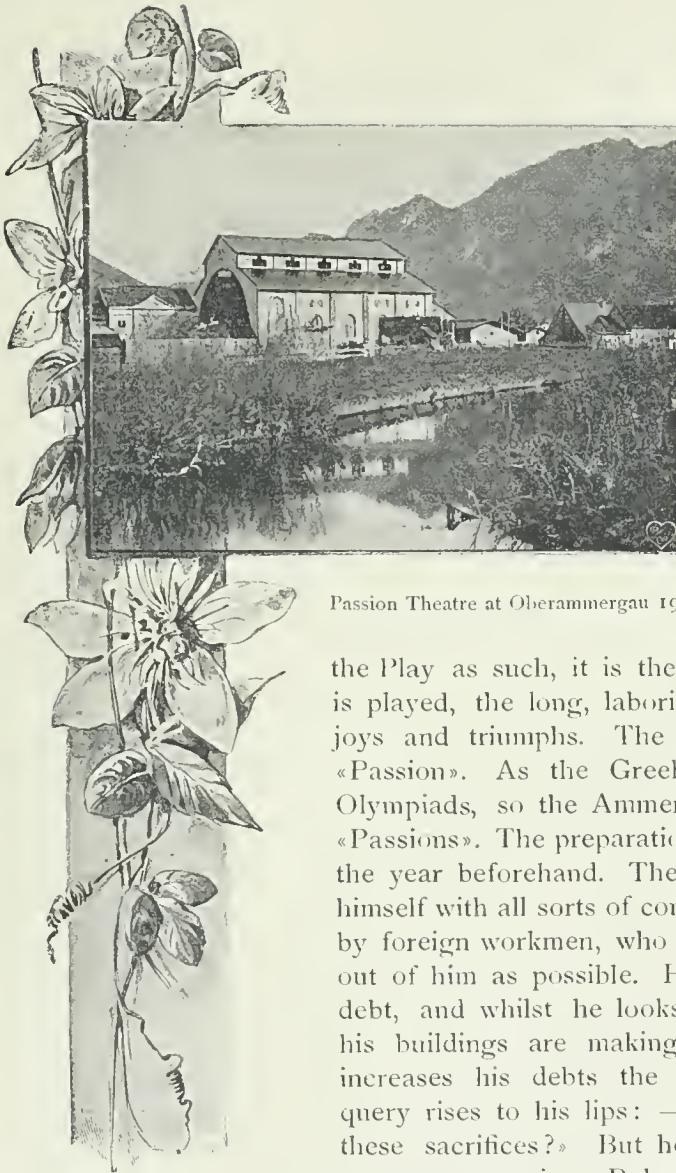
Bergeinsamkeit.

*Der Abend naht, die Schatten werden länger,
Die Sonne sinkt und eisig füllt der Thau.
Kein Abendrot, das Herz schlägt bang und bänger,
Der letzte Strahl erloschen — Grau in Grau.
«Auf hin zum Licht, — da drunten brennen Kerzen,
Dort tönt Gesang, und dreh'n sie sich im Kreis —
Was bleibst allein Du mit dem bangen Herzen
Auf Bergeshöhen zwischen Schnee und Eis?
Bald wird Dich flieh'n der letzte der Genossen,
Die Einsamkeit schreckt Kinder, wie die Nacht —»
Ich aber steh', vom Geisterlicht umflossen,
Und halte Zwiesprach mit der ew'gen Macht.*

1897.

Wilhelmine von Hillern.





Passion Theatre at Oberammergau 1900.

The "Passion".

So the time of the «Passion» has come round again.

The «Passion» is not only the Play as such, it is the whole summer during which it is played, the long, laborious time with all its cares and joys and triumphs. The whole period is known as the «Passion». As the Greeks used to count according to Olympiads, so the Ammergauers count according to the «Passions». The preparations for the Passion begin already the year beforehand. The father of the household busies himself with all sorts of constructive work, and is tormented by foreign workmen, who try to squeeze as much capital out of him as possible. He borrows money and gets into debt, and whilst he looks on with pride at the progress his buildings are making, whose growth however only increases his debts the more, yet sometimes the sad query rises to his lips: — «Is it worth while making all these sacrifices?» But he is an Ammergauer, that is to say, an easy-going «Bohemian».

The careful housewife looks over her store of bedding, mattresses, pillows, blankets, etc. How much of the old stock will she be able to use? Ten years is a long time — how much has been spoilt through the cold, damp winters by being indifferently stored away — how much has had to be sold because there was no room to store it away.

And in the meantime the «Kofelweibla» has not been idle. It is sad to think of the fine furniture, lying there unused, and so each year she brings one

little earthly mortal more, and the bigger ones have to give up their cots to the little ones, and are laid in the «Passion» beds. Then when the housewife comes to investigate the matter she finds that out of ten or twelve «Passion» beds, perhaps only two or three beds are complete, and she puzzles her brain as to how she shall provide bedding for the other nine or so, for her husband's building concerns are taking a tremendous pile of money. She considers and considers, and hopefully looks forward to the Passion election.

If her husband gets the part, upon which he has set his heart, and the daughter sings among the «*Schutzgeister*», and the two boys are allowed to help among the violins, and perhaps one or two of the children take part among the folk, then all will be well, and what the visitors bring will be clear gain.

And the boys are working hard at carving, they are busy on all kinds of little articles, which the visitors will buy, and which should bring in a nice little sum.

But to-day the husband has no soul for work, he must go to the inn and hear what they say about the elections. The Passion Committee has already met. It consists of the parish Council, — the mayor, deputies and ten councillors, — of the pastor and of six specially chosen members of the parish. The Committee meetings have been going on for some time; the various motions are all entered in the minutes. Now the chief election day is approaching; the whole village awaits the result with breathless interest.

The decision has been put off this time longer than usual. It always took place on St. Nicolas' Day. This year it has been fixed for the 21st of December.

At last however the great day came. At eight o'clock in the morning there was Divine Service; how fervently many must have prayed that their wishes would be fulfilled. But when evening had come, how many disappointed hopes, how many souls hurt to the quick. The young newcomers were jubilant, the old hands tried to hide their chagrin as stoically as possible. The pain of having to give up his sole task in life laid the former «Christus» for some time on the sickbed; the Choragus Jakob Rutz, one of the most worthy, but ambitious members of the Passion Play, still feels it deeply that the spoken part of the prologue has been confided to Mayr. In a word the Passion election always causes much heart-burning, disappointment and grief, and it is a good thing that a certain time elapses between the elections and the Play, so that the wounds have time to heal up somewhat.

And now we will review in order all those who are connected with the Passion Play. The reader has perhaps noticed that there is a certain tendency in this book to bring forward the forgotten and unrecognised ones.

I should therefore like to mention one personage, who, though not in the official list, has a great deal to do with the Play and is in a position to do inestimable good for the cause. It is the so-called «*Passionsfreund*», who, without being an Ammergauer helps the latter in word and deed, does various commissions for them -- is ready to go through fire and water for them — and, above all, is a true and thorough worshipper of the Passion.

In the history of Ammergau we come across a number of such men; the last was Dr. Frankl, Surgeon to the Bavarian Court, in 1840, whose many-sided activity was astonishing. — Then the post seems to have been neglected to a certain extent during the last decades, but this year it is occupied again, and by no other than the genial publisher of this book, Herr Carl Schnell, partner in the firm of Carl Aug. Seyfried and Comp. That Herr Schnell must be a very able man, will be perhaps clear to the reader when he sees that he is a publisher whom his author praises — that happens to a publisher only in the rarest of cases. If that is already a wonderful thing, the second wonderful thing is none the less great, namely, that a man, who was guided to Ammergau from purely business motives, should become in so short a time such a fanatical friend of Ammergau.

What a great deal various Ammergauers owe to his practical and business-like energy — to his sensible advice in business affairs, and how far-reaching his activity is, is shown by the fact that several of his Ammergau friends have already given him the nickname of «Dr. Frankl». If Herr Schnell has already distinguished himself from an ideal point of view, by the manner in which he has got up this work, he has also proved his ability and insight in all practical matters. May Ammergau be blessed with many such friends.

And now we will pass on to those actually concerned in the Play.

The leading spirit in the Play, the *Bürgermeister* Lang, I have already portrayed, also the *Vorstand* Ludwig Lang, the artistic adviser of the whole, and arranger of the tableaux. The next place, after the highest in command, is occupied by the two «*Generalstübler*», the conductors Lang and Feldigl. We have already seen, in the chapter about the music, how much Ammergau owes to these two. Eduard Lang has worked now for nearly thirty years with tireless energy in training the young musical talent of Oberammergau. Who knows how many scores the brave man has not secretly written in the still hours of the night, how many valuable works he has not copied out and arranged, the procuring of which would have cost the little band too much. Such things the Ammergauer never mentions, they come to him as a matter of course.

The teacher Feldigl has also now for nearly ten years been the musical soul of Ammergau. In the Passion Play itself he is the one who has chiefly undertaken the directing of the choruses and the training of the young violinists; he also takes it in turn with Lang to conduct.

He is a man of eminent musical and literary gifts, and of a deeply religious and peaceable nature. He is far removed from



The young Drummers of the «*Türkische Musik*» in Oberammergau.

all that is vulgar or base, as he is from all harshness or self-conceit. If I might express a wish in regard to Feldigl it would be that he had more concentration. He is a clever composer, a pleasing poet, can set words skilfully to music, is a good editor, and — last but not least — an able teacher. To combine all that however requires the strength



The Family of Jakob Rutz — Leader of the Choir in the Passion Play 1900. Photograph taken on the occasion of the celebration of his silver wedding.



The Blacksmith, Jakob Rutz, at work.

not mentioned, is the Choragus Jakob Rutz, one of the most practical, capable, and useful members in the Play. He has worked in the Chorus since 1860, when he attracted attention through his beautiful voice and thorough musical training. As a proof of his musical powers, I may state that, after the departure of Eduard Zwick, he sang both bass and tenor solos for several years in the church choir, through which he has unfortunately greatly damaged his beautiful voice. He is a man of tremendous ambition and exceptional

and time of two men's lives, and it is not astonishing that he is sometimes rather absent-minded and hasty, and consequently perhaps often misunderstood by critical natures.

The next in the Passion Play, whom I have as yet



Jakob Rutz, now Leader of the Choir, as «Genius» (1871). Obligated partly to wear false hair, having just returned from the war.



Jakob Rutz as Leader of the Choir 1880, 1890 and 1900,
(Photograph taken 1890).

desire for literary culture; but he is also really the only one among the Ammergauers, of whom one can say, that he has genuine theatre blood in him. He has an inexhaustible repertory of theatrical and musical scenes, and is of course thoroughly versed in all stage and music literature. If you go past the smith's house of an evening on holidays, you will hear singing and piano playing, or a new rôle being recited. Rutz took part in the campaigns of '66 and '70 and was often under fire. His children are also musically disposed, his two daughters sing in the Chorus and have very good voices. He has a good, homely, industrious, stout little wife, who decidedly represents the realistic and practical side of life as compared to the idealistic ambitions of her husband.

And now we will go towards the Passion theatre, to a plain, simple house near the Ammerbrücke.

A peculiar, strange feeling seizes us, we are going to the «Christus» — but it is not *our* «Christus» any more, whom we have known for twenty years, and honoured as such. Shall we go to the new «Christus», whom we do not know, who has now taken the place of the old one? We are almost from the first resolved not to recognise him, and to remain true to our ideal even though his hair is now white.

But look! a figure is coming towards us — a slim, chaste, ascetic figure. On the almost too narrow shoulders sits a head



Oberammergau, View of the Village with the Potter's House. (Christus-Lang)

framed in long wavy hair, smoothly parted in the middle; a pair of blue eyes look at us with the pious, innocent expression of a naive, almost childish soul; the whole head is so typically that of a «Christ» that his appearance at once reminds us of one of those modern French paintings where Christ appears to mankind in the ordinary every-

same, — but it is the «Christus» such as our greatest artists have imagined him.

Mayr was of the dark, Roman type — the Christ of a Titian, a Velasquez,



Anton Lang

The Christus of 1900. Anton Lang.

day garments of our time, but with the head of the Saviour. One look at this stirring youthful appearance, this head, bent in unconscious meekness, is sufficient; an involuntary emotion seizes us. It is not the interesting individuality of Mayr, sparkling in manifold colours, not the powerful, artistically eminent personality of the



The Christus of 1900 Anton Lang
at his daily occupation.

a Van Dyck; Anton Lang is of the blonde, truly Christ-like type, such as Raphael so often painted, such as Overbeck, Steinle and Führich have created. Yes, the pure profile, the slightly curved nose, the small mouth, remind us strongly of that figure of our Lord which is recognised by the Church as being the only proper representation. — Anton Lang is a true man, a pure, deep-thinking soul. — He has grown up in the circle of a loving family, under the eyes of parents and grandparents, and has retained the naive simplicity of childhood in his temperament. He is now twenty-five years old, has attended the school at Oberammergau, learned



Rochus Lang (Father of Christus Lang and the Herod of 1900)
as Ezekiel 1890.

his father's trade, was a short time in Munich and Stuttgart, and then returned again to his home. In several rehearsal theatres he has shown himself to be a talented actor. But his high ideals, his blameless life have worked more than his dramatic abilities to make him worthy of his part. Anton Lang reads a great deal, takes great interest in art, and composes charming little poems, simple in form, but full of warm feeling and a sense for the beautiful. I give one of them here: —

*Grüss Deinen Schöpfer mir, Du
treue Sonne,
Die Du mein Herz so sehr er-
füllt mit Wonne,
Die Du erhellt, erwärmt das
Heimatthal,
Sei mir gegrüsst viel tausend,
tausendmal.*

*Erfreu' wie mich, die guten Menschen
alle,
Auf dass sie preisen Gott mit Jubel-
schalle;
Dass sie einander lieben immerfort,
Im Handeln es bezeugen — nicht im
Wort.*

*Und hat der Mensch ein treues Herz
gefunden,
Mög' es ihm bleiben immerdar ver-
bunden,
Und wie die Nacht besiegt das Morgen-
rot
So strahlt die Liebe über jede Not.*

Anton Lang.

Indescribable was the joy of the father, the excellent actor of Herod, a very handsome man, who looks with tears of pride and emotion on his dutiful young son, who has never caused him an hour's anxiety. — May the young «Christus» retain his peace and purity of soul, his innocent and natural manners, when the stream of visitors pours into the quiet house, with their loud, and often extravagant praise.

Whilst young Lang is a true Germanic type of an ascetic Nazarene, the «Mother of God» is on the other hand of a dark race — with wonderful, black hair, an emotional mouth, and the great expressive eyes of the Flungers. She is still very young; only nineteen years old. She was born in 1881 and has so far never played in any practice theatre. Her father's strictness always kept her back from taking part in any social evenings, and it is probably owing to this circumstance that she



Anna Flunger

Anna Flunger (Virgin Mary 1900.)

French Madonnas. The face is still slightly too childish and round — I think that, in a few years, it will have shaped itself into a fine oval — but is very effective in costume, and her whole figure is full of nobility.

Bertha Wolf, the Magdalene, has also a fine appearance, a stately blonde with lovely hair. In 1890 she was the Angel on the Mount of Olives.

Altogether, the women have no disturbing influence on the Play this year, as has unfortunately so often been the case in former years. They are mostly fresh, young figures with pleasing, musical voices.

has a nature, naive and innocent as that of a child.

When she was chosen as «Mary», it was not known whether she would be able to act, nor how; and she herself had no idea how she should move and deport herself on the stage. But the excellent schooling of the *Bürgermeister* Lang has awakened in Anna the slumbering talent of the Flunger family, and her «Mary» is now a performance that can rank with the best.

She is of the dark type of the Spanish and



Sebastian Lang (the present Caiaphas)
as Quintus, Servant of Pilate (1870).

Among the newly elected is a well known talent, the sacristan Sebastian Lang, «Caiaphas» for this year. For several seasons he was Nathanael, and seconded the «*Bürgermeister-Caiaphas*» in a masterly manner. Now he himself represents the despotic High Priest, and though he cannot attain to the height of his predecessor, still his stately bearing and appearance will help to replace what

must be lacking in fervour and intellectual command.

Sebastian Lang is nearly fifty years old, a clever carver, and a just, devout man, one might almost say *too* good to be able to represent Caiaphas in all his wickedness. To represent such a character requires a strongly divinatorial talent, or a slight touch of devilry in one's nature. I can scarcely imagine that the kindly, good-natured man will feel properly at home in all the devilish machinations of Christ's arch-enemy.

Pilate is taken this year by the former Rabbi, Sebastian Bauer, the captain of the local fire brigade. He is one of the best actors, and brings out the superiority and powerful personality of the aristocratic Roman



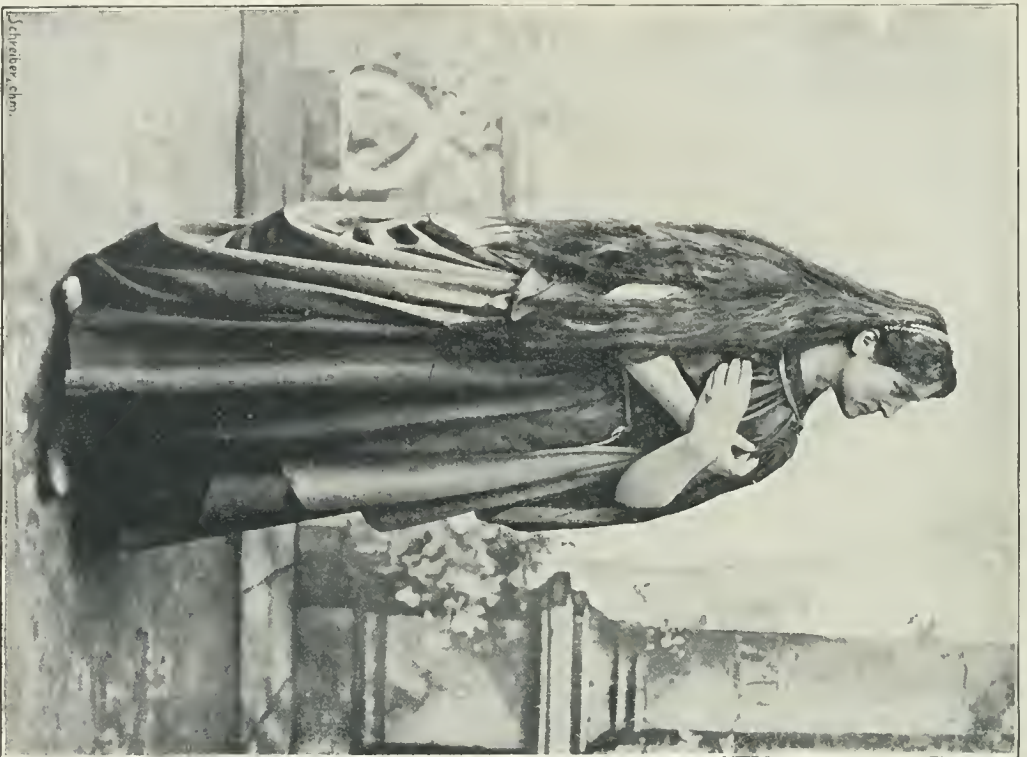
Sebastian Lang jun., as Nathanael (1880).



Sebastian Lang (Caiaphas of 1900) as Nathanael 1890.



Sebastian Lang (Caiaphas of 1900).



Schreyer, chm.

By permission of Leo Schreyer, Stuttgart.

Mary Magdalene (Bertha Wolf)
Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.



Schreyer, chm.

By permission of Leo Schreyer, Stuttgart.

St. John (Peter Rendl)
Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.



Sebastian Bauer as Archilaus Rabbi (1880).

fervent acting.

A chief favourite among the people is, and has always been, the «Judas». It is a curious thing that, since past ages, the rôle of Judas has always had a comicelement



Peter Rendl, St. John (1900)
at his work,

to perfection. It does one really good to hear the cutting way in which he tells the High Priest's band his views.

The St. John of Peter Rendl is also a typical figure, and reminds one strongly of St. John in Leonardo da Vinci's famous picture of the Last Supper. Peter Rendl played the same part in 1890, and is distinguished for his fine speaking and



Peter Rendl, St. John 1900

in it. It formerly possessed a number of comic traits. These have now been completely abolished, and the Judas of to-day is a figure of intense tragedy, but for the people he still remains, like the unhappy Barabbas, a humorous figure.

The present Judas, Johann Zwink, comes of one of the oldest and most honoured Passion families. At one time he acted St. John, and was especially admired by the English. Of all the actors he has decidedly the



The Virgin Mary and St. John 1850 (Rosa Lang and Peter Rendl.)

most interesting head, and acts magnificently. .

Johann Zwink shows the full tragedy of his part in every detail, but a tragic vein also runs through



Johann Zwink as St. John (1870).



Johann Zwink as Judas (1900).



Johann Zwink, great grandson of the renowned Lufthaler Zwink.



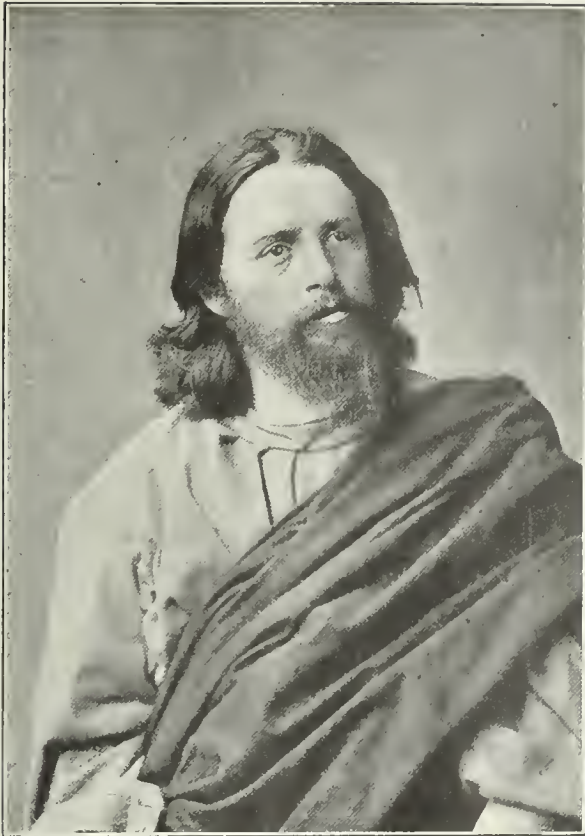
By permission of Leo Schweyer, Stuttgart

Caiaphas (Sebastian Lang)
Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.



By permission of Leo Schweyer, Stuttgart.

Pilate (Sebastian Bauer)
Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.



Andreas Lang (Rabbi of 1900) as Thomas 1850.

his life. As a decorative painter he has never reached a comfortable position in life. He had four fine children, of whom one, a daughter, sings in the Chorus. His eldest son was one day hit on the head by a rough school-teacher, which led to a severe affection of the brain. His unhappy father must now see his eldest born, who in his



Andreas Lang at his work.



Andreas Braun (Joseph of Aritmathaea 1890).

earliest youth showed promising signs of becoming an eminent actor, gradually pine away, a hopeless cripple.

Among the new ones, the Rabbi, Andreas Lang is specially to be mentioned. He has already given evidence of his dramatic talent in the practice theatre. In the year 1890 he was the apostle St. Thomas.

A few years ago he carved the life-size figure of the Emperor Frederick which stands on the Rugard in Rügen. His wife is a



Anton Bartl as Roman Captain 1880, 1890 and 1900.

important part at the Crucifixion, and is consequently one of the «best hated» personages in the Play.

grand - daughter of Michael Diemer, and as already mentioned a valuable member of the Chorus. Two of his sons, aged respectively fifteen and thirteen years, play the violin in the Passion orchestra.

Excellent actors too are Gregor Breitsamter, this year's Nathaniel, and Andreas Mayr as Dathan.

«Joseph of Arimathaea» is also finely rendered by the carver Andreas Braun, and likewise «Nicodemus» by Wilhelm Rutz. Andreas Braun has a fine characteristic head, and is, in everyday life, of a noble and fine-feeling nature. Wilhelm Rutz has distinguished himself in all practice pieces in the *Uebungstheater* as an excellent comedian; in his Nicodemus he shows that he can also perform parts of deep and earnest feeling.

Anton Bartl makes a fine Roman captain. He plays an

If we wish to compare the Passion Play of to-day with that of former times, the question arises: — How does our present Play stand in relation to past performances? Has the apprehension, that was repeatedly evinced in 1890, come true, that the Passion Play would become more and more a matter of speculation, that it would no more fit in with modern ideas?

I look back over a period of twenty years, and see myself, with my mother and sisters, on our first visit to Oberammergau; ignorant of its geography, its conditions, its significance, drawn thither solely by the fame of the Passion Play.

A neatly written poem hangs in the *Bürgermeister's* office, forgotten and unnoticed. It was written by me twenty years ago, after the first over-powering impression of the Passion Play, and I write it down here, because it testifies to the vital force which this impression can awaken in us.



By permission of Leo Schweyer, Stuttgart.

St. Peter (Thomas Rendl)

Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.



By permission of Leo Schweyer, Stuttgart.

Judas (Johann Zwink)

Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.

Oberammergau.

(Nach dem Passionsspiel 1830.)

*Manna hat einst in der Wüste
Seinem Volk der Herr gegeben,
Dass die Hungernden es stärke
Und erweck' zu neuem Leben.*

*Manna warf er, Himmelsspeise,
In das stille Dorf hernieder,
Geistesmanna, das die Seelen
Füllt mit neuem Leben wieder.*

*Und nachdem sie's aufgenommen,
Kann der Genius nimmer sterben,
Nein, von Kind auf Kindeskind
Wird er weiter sich vererben.*

*Was empfangen eure Ahnen
Einst als heil'ge Geistesnahrung,
Stärkt noch jetzt der Völker Schaa'ren,
Eine Gottesoffenbarung.*

*Jenes Manna in der Wüste
War dahtin, als sie's genossen,
Doch das Manna eurer Seelen —
Segnend ist es ausgeflossen.*

*Manna spendet, Himmelsspeise,
Ihr den kranken, müden Herzen,
Manna jenen, die da ringen
In des Zweifels bitterm Schmerzen.*

*Balsam allen gläub'gen Seelen,
Sie von jedem Gram zu lösen —
Werd's zum Strafgericht den Spöttern!
Werd's zur Euertauf den Bösen!*

*Werd's euch selber, die ihr's spendet,
Zu dem Heilungsmahl der Liebe,
Gebe euch des Friedens Segen,
Schütz' euch vor dem Weltgetriebe!*

*Gleich der Frucht, die Ceres' Tochter,
Die sie ass, zum Orkus bannte,
Zwing' es euch, die ihr's gekostet,
Immer hin zum Heimathlande.*

*Binde euch, ein Mahl des Bundes,
Stets das grosse Werk zu neuen:
Reines Glaubens, reines Herzens
Manna segnend auszustreuen.*

My feelings and remembrances of that time I have cherished as sacred — but to see the Play again — I could not make up my mind to it. The first time it was an event of a life-time, the second time it is a drama. «It cannot be better than it was then — it can only deteriorate» was my fixed idea, and I welcomed the thought of attending the Passion Play almost with aversion. But I have to write about it. There is nothing for it — I must see it.

And lo! when I had become accustomed to the new Auditorium and many a strange detail, when the Chorus came out in their bright flowing robes, a feeling came over me such as Faust must have felt when he heard the Easter chimes: «Die Thräne quillt, die Erde hat mich wieder.»

Yes, the old Passion-charm had seized me again. And yet it was different. It was no longer strange, unknown, with the stirring force which crept over the unprepared spirit like a thief in the night.

Apart from the religious feeling, apart from the stirring force of the subject in itself, the impression of this year's performance was above all that of perfect finish. Like a revelation, two things became clear to me in this representation. Firstly, the deep sincerity, the spiritual and intellectual concentration of the whole, which will remain immovably the same, unchanged through time and space. Whether the theatre is large or small, the scenery beautiful or ugly, the auditorium open or covered in, these are secondary considerations. All modern improvements — from the awful railway with its poisonous breath and mocking whistle, which disturbs every performance, — to the flying-apparatus which carries the «Christus» towards heaven — are of small import compared to the irresistible *spirit* of the Play. Secondly it was clear to me that it is this spirit, and it alone, which purifies and ennobles the Passion Play, and raises it to a standard of progressive artistic completion. The spirit of the Passion Play has, in the course of centuries, become of such refined beauty that we may confidently place it by the side of the greatest productions in art. Certainly, I fear very few Passion pilgrims will look at it in this light. The visitor of twenty years ago, who comes again to-day, will ascribe the æsthetic enjoyment, which he derives from the artistically finished representation, to the technical improvements; he will speak of the enlarged theatre, the new scenery, the covered hall as triumphs of modern progress, and will completely ignore the fact that the general level of the whole performance is incomparably higher than it was twenty years ago. The harsh, high-pitched voices of the women, the frequent, ugly, and often unintelligible use of dialect, the impossible acting of some of the minor performers, the affected, forced tone of individual untrained actors, all that has disappeared this year. All the players, even in the smallest rôles, have a noble, pure, and natural way of speaking and part of them are really highly talented. The women too have, one and all, gentle, sympathetic voices and graceful movements; there is no disturbing or comic element. But for all that the general impression is by no means one of mechanical routine. Lang's excellent training is everywhere noticeable, but the increased individual refinement of the people themselves is also noticeable. The descent from the Cross, for instance, is decidedly the finest thing that human skill and feeling can produce.

The text in its old-fashioned simplicity, its touching adherence to the Bible, has in no single instance a clumsy effect. The only thing that I should like to see away would be the dragging scenes in the High Council and then the monologues of the three disciples, Peter, John, and Judas. A stirring dialogue between Peter and John could so easily be introduced here, and Peter's remorse be just as well expressed as in the dreary form of the monologue. The choruses and recitatives seem to me rather long, and the time is often terribly slow. Then the double tableaux, though beautiful, are also somewhat tiring, because the subjects are uninteresting. I should think that more interesting and instructive subjects might be found in the Bible which would at the same time render two tableaux unnecessary. But my chief complaint is against the rapid transition from the Crucifixion to the Ascension.

In my opinion a great mistake is made here. Immediately after the Grave-chorus, comes the Resurrection, without any introduction, and then follows the Ascension as a tableau. The former scenes with the guards, and the scenes with

the women, to whom Christ appears as a gardener, are now left out. But the quick change, as it now is, is impossible. Firstly, the soul cannot immediately attune itself to the jubilant Hallelujahs of the Ascension after the deep emotion caused by the sufferings of Christ; secondly there is no power of conviction in the Ascension as here given — theatrically it is perfect, but it is no real event which touches us as human beings. To my mind, the old scene with the apostle Thomas should be re-introduced here, and following it, the Ascension from the midst of the disciples.

The strong and picturesque heads of the disciples would make a fine picture, and the contrast between the short scene with Mary Magdalene, and the proof of the real, bodily Resurrection of our Lord to the unbelieving Thomas would be extremely interesting, not only dogmatically but also artistically. The scene with Magdalene would have to be introduced, because, at the leave-taking in Bethany, Christ says: «In the early morn, in the garden, wilt thou see me again». We should witness the fulfilment of these words. Through these scenes the emotions would be prepared for the final apotheosis, and the Resurrection, which now only has a theatrical effect, would become reality.

And now I will give the reader a short description of the impressions on that great day.

We are awakened early by the report of the signal gun. We follow the stream of devout people to the church, where my fellow-countryman (from Baden) to whose kindness I owe the interesting biography of his predecessor Unhoch, holds early mass. We see the church filled with crowds of worshippers, and most of the Passion actors are there to fortify themselves for the great work with a prayer.

But renewed reports warn us that the Play is about to commence, and we must make haste if we are to get there in time.

A curious sensation comes over us as we approach the huge hall with its large vaulted roof. — A devout stillness surrounds us, infinite awe seizes us at the sight of the venerable stage, which, with but few, minor alterations, has remained practically the same through all these centuries. A place of such sacred art is holy ground. — And away over the gable of the theatre we see the peaks of the mountains, and the sunshine of a glorious spring morning floods the bye-ways of Jerusalem.

The music begins - - muffled and harmonious from the half hidden orchestra. From the columned halls on either side of the stage, the Chorus slowly and solemnly comes forth.



By permission of Leo Schweyer, Stuttgart.

Prologus (Jos. Mayr — Christus-Mayr)
Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.

In antique white robes, with coloured mantles, it strides in two processions across the proscenium taking up its position in one long row, and in the centre, towering over all, a tall figure in flowing white garments, worked with gold. It appeals to us like a figure from another world. The high, golden diadem crowns a proudly raised head with long white hair and beard. Is it the priest of an Egyptian divinity? Is it a prophet out of the old Testament?

It is Joseph Mayr, the former Christus, who now stands before us as *«Prolog»*.

The way he wears his handsome dress, arranged by his own hands, the way in which he walks in the trailing garments — this alone is a

picture of such imposing beauty that one never tires of looking at it. The Choragus begins his recitative

Wurf zum heiligen Stawen dich nieder,
Von Gottes Fluch gebeugtes Geschlecht!
Friede dir — aus Sion Gnade wieder!
Nicht ewig zürnt Er,
Der Beleidigte — ist sein Zürnen gleich gerecht.

„Ich will“ — so spricht den Herrn —
„Den Tod des Sünders nicht — vergeben
Will ich ihm — er soll leben?
Versöhnen wird ihn selbst meines Sohnes Blut,
versöhnen!“
Preis. Anbetung. Freudenthränen. Ewigr Dir!

O, human race! by sin and shame laid low,
Adore thy God: bend down and kiss the dust!
Peace then shall come, and grace from Zion flow;
Not ever spurns He
The Offended One: although His wrath is just!

„I will“ the Lord doth say,
„Not that the sinner die — forgive
Will I his guilt, and he shall live!
My Son's own blood shall now atone for him!“,
Praise, worship, tears of joy to Thee, Eternal
One!

Just as we burst into tears when sympathisingly and unexpectedly spoken to, of an old and long-hidden sorrow — so, upon the address uttered by the Choragus, the whole misery of the curse upon mankind seems to come over us, and we shed uncontrollable tears of remorse.

The first Tableau is shown: «The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise.»

Adam and Eve, dressed in skins, are driven out of Paradise. Adam hides his face with his hands, but Eve on the other hand casts a longing glance back to the lost Paradise, and with her, sorrowing mankind looks back once more upon the lost Paradise of religious peace and childlike innocence. The Chorus accompanies



The Expulsion from Paradise. (Photograph taken in 1890.)

this tableau with most touching and appropriate music. And now the «Prolog» begins — he recites the fine introductory verses. —

Prologue.

*Alle seien begrüsst, welche die Liebe
hier — Um den Heiland vereint, trauernd
ihm nachzugeh'n — Auf dem Wege des
Leidens — Bis zur Stätte der Grabesruh.*

*Die von nahe und fern heute gekommen
sind, — Alle fühlten sich hier, Eines in
Brudersinn, — Als die Jünger des
Einen, — Der für alle gelitten hat!*

*Greetings to you all who have come
from far and near to witness the suf-
ferings and death of Christ. All here
are united in love, in memory of
the One who for us suffered bitterest
death, and our tenderest thoughts and
love turn to Him. The hour for the*

Der sich hingab für uns, treuer Erbarmung voll, — In den bittersten Tod. Ihm seien zugewandt — Unsre Blicke und Herzen — In einmütigem Dankgefühl.

fulfilment of our Holy vow has now come; join your prayers with ours, we beseech you.

Zugekehrt seien ihm uns're Gedanken all! — Betet, betet mit uns, da sich die Stund' erfüllt, — Dass des heil'gen Gelübdes — Schuld wir zahlen dem Ewigen.

The curtain again divides, and we now have the second tableau: The Adoration of the Cross by Children, and Hosts of Angels. Here now comes in the beautiful Chorus «Ew'ger höre Deiner Kinder Stammeln, weil ein Kind ja nichts als Stammeln kann».

*Ew'ger! Höre Deiner Kinder Stammeln!
Hör' den lauten Dank der Herzen
dann,
Die beim grossen Opfer sich versammeln,
Beten Dich voll heil'ger Ehrfurcht an.
Folget dem Versöhner nun zur Seite,
Bis er seinen rauhen Dornenpfad
Durchgekämpft und im heissen Streite
Blutend für uns ausgelitten hat.*

*Eternal God, O hear Thy children's
prayer,
Though children-like we pray with fal-
tering tone;
Those who to see the Sacrifice repair,
Bow low in faith and worship at Thy
throne!
Oh! follow close by the Redeemer's side,
The while He, patient, treads the
thorny path;
Nor leave Him while He struggles with
the tide,
Until for you the victory He hath.*

Behind the scene are now heard the loud cries of Hosanna, and mingling with the song of the Chorus are heard the voices of the jubilant crowd bringing Hosannas to their Lord and Saviour. The spectator is strongly impressed; he hardly expected to find these masses of people, such good taste in the colour and arrangement of the costumes, together with this flow of pulsating life in every movement and action. The first impression is overpowering and we put the questions to ourselves: Does all this originate from heaven, is it born of earth, is it art, is it nature, or is it both? We never have seen the like before. We have scarcely grasped all this when we are suddenly placed under the spell of the wonder of wonders, and to quote the words of the song «die Erfüllung fängt schon an» (the fulfilment of the Promise now begins.)

Now He Himself appears, and a fervent glow of devotion pervades our hearts when we see before our very eyes the figure which is so familiar to us from the days of our childhood — from numberless pictures. He steps forth before us a living form. All this is acted and yet not acted as it were; for that which distinguishes it from mere acting is the spirit of true belief. And over the audience

and the performers an invisible web is woven, which with a thousand threads connects the one with the others. — And how really fine these moving masses of people are, in their bright raiments, which in no way give the idea of mere costumes! — In these figures so true to life we see best how wrong the idea of our modern painters is, who can only imagine »Truth» clothed in the every-day dress of our European fashions.

When we witness the strewing of palms upon which the Son of Man treads, his slender form in the traditional red and grey garments standing out in all its chastity — when we see the face with the expression of infinite gentleness and submission, we realize that he is standing before us in the flesh:

*Heil Dir! Heil Dir! o Davids Sohn!
Heil Dir! Heil Dir! der Väter Thron
Gebühret Dir.*

*Der in des Höchsten Namen kömmt,
Dem Israel entgegen strömt!
Dich preisen wir.*

*Hosanna! Der im Himmel wohnt,
Der sende alle Huld auf Dich!
Hosanna! Der dort oben thront,
Erhalte uns Dich ewiglich.*

*Heil Dir! Heil Dir etc. etc.
Gesegnet sei, das neu auferbet,
Des Vaters David Volk und Reich!
Ihr Völker segnet, preiset, hebt
Den Sohn empor, dem Vater gleich.*

*Heil Dir! Heil Dir etc. etc.
Hosanna! unserm Königssohne
Ertöne durch die Lüfte weit.
Hosanna! Auf des Vaters Throne
Regiere er voll Herrlichkeit.*

*All hail! all hail! O David's Son!
All hail! all hail! Thy Father's throne
Belongs to Thee!*

*Who cometh in the name most high,
Whom Israel's children glorify,
We praise but Thee!*

*Hosanna! He that dwells above,
Send down from heaven all grace to Thee:
Hosanna! may the God of love
Keep us as Thine eternally!*

All hail, etc.

*O blissful day that shall restore
Our father David's throne and race!
Ye peoples come, and God adore,
Who gives us of His constant grace!
All hail, etc.*

*Hosanna! to our royal Son!
On every breeze send forth the strain!
Hosanna! on His Father's throne
In majesty He aye will reign!
All hail, All hail!*

The representative of this year's Christus will most favourably bear comparison with his predecessor Mayr. — The two can stand side by side — just as well as the various types of Christ of various artists. — What Anton Lang lacks of Mayr's spiritual fervour is replaced by his more dogmatically correct appearance — where he cannot command the depth of expression of his predecessor he has the indescribable dignity and majesty, as also the infinite pathos, of the whole figure. If Mayr was more the powerful God, who in full knowledge of the same, voluntarily met his death — with whom only the human part of his nature was to a certain extent, under his strong will, shaken in its depths — and whose agonizing groans always made us recognize the conflict between the Godhead and Man — so Anton Lang is entirely the Lamb of God, who without complaining, without resisting, bears the sins of the world in dumb submission. — I believe that, Flunger excepted, there has been no such typical and truly German embodiment

of the Nazarene during the whole of the century as in Anton Lang. When he is hanging on the Cross, it is just as if the wonderful picture of the Crucifixion by Overbeck in the Rosminianum at Stresa were before us.

But let us now continue to follow the course of the Play. In the meantime Christ has alighted from the ass and has entered the precincts of the temple. He sees the desecrated spot which the traders have turned into a market place. In holy anger he raises his hand, overturns the tables, and brandishes the scourge over the heads of the profaners of the temple. The Pharisees become enraged, the traders conspire together for revenge. The authority of the priesthood which threatens to become overthrown now associates itself with the animal nature in man, and one and all conspire together to destroy Him. The foundation is now laid upon which the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders can erect their pernicious fabric. In the next act begins the conspiracy of the High Council.

We may call this assembling of the High Council a master piece of the text of Weiss and Daisenberger, so powerfully do those assembled work upon us. The eminent dialectics of the Chief High Priest, the religious fanaticism, the priestly hierarchy in danger of being overthrown, the passionateness of the Jewish character which is expressed in the words: «An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth» — all this presents a picture of grandest truth and of masterly portrayal of character.

Der Abschied zu Bethania.)*

The Parting at Bethany.

Prolog.

Der mit heltem Blicke durchschaut der Zukunft — Schleier, sieht schon nahen das Ungewitter, — Das sich drohend sammelt, ob seinem Haupte — Sich zu entladen.

Weilend noch im Kreise der Seinen, kündigt — Er den lieben Freunden das Wort des Scheidens, — Ach, ein Wort, das schmerzlichst der treuen Mutter Seele verwundet.

Sieht, wie tiefbetrübt des Tobias Mutter — Nachblickt noch dem schiedenden Herzenssolne, — Und in Thränenströmen ergießt den Kummer — Zärtlicher Liebe!

So auch weint die Mutter des Gottessohnes Dem Geliebten nach, der entschlossen hingeht, — Durch der Liebe sühnenden Tod der Menschheit — Sünde zu tilgen.

Prologue: Whoever with clear vision pierces the veil of the future, sees already the gathering of the storm, which will soon burst about Him. Still tarrying in the circle of his friends He speaks of the coming separation — words, alas, which grievously wound His mother's tender heart.

See with what deep sorrow, the mother of Tobias looks after the departing son of her heart, and in flood of tears pours out her grief. Thus also does Christ's mother lament her Beloved, who goes forth to expiate the sins of mankind through His death.

The Leave-taking at Bethany follows, and the whole shadow of coming painful events, as described in the gospel of St. John, seems to cast itself over our hearts, and we shudder at the thought of how they will come to pass.

The Prologue cited in this work is taken from the book «Officieller Gesamttext des Oberammergauer Passionsspieles» Heinrich Korff-Oberammergau. Price 1 Mk.

Here for the first time the women appear. Mary Magdalene anoints the feet of the Lord and dries them with her long fair hair. Judas is enraged at the waste, and we feel that avarice has already seized his soul. Then we witness the sorrowful leave-taking of the Saviour and His disciples, we see the last leave-taking from the Mother, whom He thanks for all her loving care which she has shown to Him in the thirty-three years of His life (one of the most beautiful and touching scenes), — There is nothing more impressive than the sight of Him, appointed to die, who in full knowledge of the same, goes to meet His destiny. All Christ's sorrowful preparations in which he explains to his disciples the expediency of his sufferings, the effective scene of the washing of feet, the sublimity of the Last Supper, all things carry the soul through a sea of approaching sorrow on to the Mount of Olives where the presentiment becomes certainty — where the apprehensive, gloomy feeling of leave-taking is converted unto heart-rending lamentation. — The impression made upon us by the Last Supper cannot be described; there are certain matters, and the Passion Play abounds in them, which cannot be described — that which we most earnestly and deeply feel we cannot and dare not express — for as soon as we attempt to account for it the immediateness of the sentiment has vanished, as the dust on the wings of the butterfly when touched.

Das heilige Abendmahl.

Prolog.

Eh' der göttliche Freund hin in sein Leiden geht, — Giebt, von Liebe gedrängt, Er sich den Seinigen — Dar zur Speise der Seelen — Auf der irdischen Pilgerfahrt. Sich zu opfern bereit, weiht er ein Opfermahl, — Das Jahrtausende fort bis zu der Zeiten Schluss — Der geretteten Menschheit — Seine Liebe verkünden soll. Mit des Manna Genuss sättigte wunderbar In der Wüste der Herr Israels Kinder einst, — Und erfreute die Herzen — Mit den Trauben aus Kanaan.



Jewish Boy (Passion Play 1900).

Herbert Lang, son of the drawing-master Ludwig Lang.

The Last Supper.

Prologue.

Our divine Benefactor, about to enter upon the career of His sufferings, urged by the impulse of His infinite charity, provides spiritual nourishment for His children during the time of their pilgrimage on earth. Being Himself prepared to be a sacrifice, He institutes a sacrament that shall proclaim through centuries and to the end of time His love for humanity. With the rain of manna the Lord miraculously fed the children of Israel in the

Doch ein besseres Mahl, wahrhaft vom Himmel her, — Bietet Jesus uns dar. grapes from Canaan. But Christ offers — Aus dem Geheimnisse Seines Leibes us a better banquet, one from very Heaven. und Blutes — Quillt uns Gnade und From His mysterious body and blood, grace and bliss flow upon humanity.»

The whole scene of the Washing of Feet and the Last Supper, as again put before us on the Ammergau stage in a most perfect and artistic manner, is a «Mystery» which brings the soul nearer to the source of all love — it is the highest manifestation of the Divine in art. That which we only know from heresay, that



Adam earns his bread by the sweat of his brow. (Photograph of 1890)

which has been handed down to us by the church as a gift of grace, and perhaps never understood, after a space of nineteen centuries — we see here in its entirety. The veil which hides the origin of the source of love falls, and we understand because we see. And as the Saviour goes from one to the other, giving bread to the disciples with that divine dignity all His own, we can realize the truth of the description in the words with which the authoress of the book «Am Kreuz» describes, in the Passion chapter, the sacred event:

«And as the dying man distributes his property among his heirs, so He too His. But He has nothing to bestow but His Own Self. As the cloud dissolves itself into millions of rain drops and waters the parched ground, so he divides Himself into millions of atoms which in the course of years are to give comfort to millions of men by means of the Holy communion. His Body and Blood is His last will; He divides them out in numberless portions to numberless heirs, and yet he remains One, and the Part is for each a Whole. For as an element remains one large unity even if it dissolves itself into ever so many

atoms — as water remains always water whether it be in single drops or in the ocean, — fire always fire, in sparks or in a conflagration — so Christ always remains Christ, in the drops in the Cup and in the morsels of Bread as in His own Person, for He is also an element, the element of the Divinity.» —

Der Verräther.

Prolog.

Ach! Den offenen Feinden gesellt der falsche — Freund sich bei, und etliche Silberlinge — Tilgen aus dem Herzen des Thoren alle — Liebe und Treue.

Ruchlos geht er hin, dieser Undankbarste, — Abzuschliessen schändlichen Seelenhandel; — Feil ist ihm um schnöden Verrätherlohn der — Beste der Lehrer,

Gleicher Sinn verhärtete Jakobs Söhne, — Dass sie unbarmherzig den eignen Bruder — Um fluchwürd'gen Preis in der fremden Wuch'rer — Hände verkauften.

Wo das Herz dem Götzen des Geldes huldigt, — Da ist aller edlere Sinn getödtet, — Ehre wird verkäuflich und Manneswort und — Liebe und Freundschaft.

Now comes the preparation for the Mount of Olives. — As the beautiful Tableau, the «Manna in the Wilderness», and the «Grapes brought by the spies from Canaan» introduce the Last Supper, so the sufferings on the Mount of Olives, and the taking prisoner of Jesus are prefaced by two introductory pictures: «Adam tilling the soil in the sweat of his brow», as a precursor of the Agony of Jesus on the Mount of Olives, and the «Assassination of Amasa by Joab near the rock of Gibeon.» The music here is exceptionally good and forms a most suitable preface to Judas treachery.

Jesus am Oelberg.

Prolog.

Wie Adam kämpft mit drückender Lebensmüh', — An Kraft erschöpft, im Schwisse des Angesichts, — Um, ach, die eigne Schuld zu büssen, — So drückt den Heiland die fremde Sünde.

The Betrayal.

Prologue.

Tempted by promise of gain, the traitorous friend joins His enemies, and for a few pieces of silver barter the life of the best of Teachers.

The same motive hardened the sons of Jacob, so that without pity they sold their own brother into a strange and unfriendly land.

When the worship of gold takes possession of the heart, all noble qualities are strangled; friendship, love and honour are sold for a price.

Jesus on the Mount of Olives.

Prologue.

Just as Adam, depressed and exhausted by the battle of life, expiates his sins, so the guilt of mankind pressed upon the Saviour.

Versenkt in einem Meere von Traurigkeit, — Von schwerer Last zur Erde das Haupt gebeugt, Von blutigem Angstschweiss überrollen, — Kämpft er den heissesten Kampf am Oelberg.

Schon naht auch, als Führer der Härscherschar, — Der treu-vergess'ne Jünger Iskarioth, — Zum Schergendienste des Verrates — Schändlich entweichend der Liebe Siegel.

So Böses that auch Joab an Amasa; — Er drückt zugleich mit heuchelnder Miene ihm — Den Kuss der Freundschaft auf die Lippen — Und in das Herz, ach, des Dolches Spitze.

Overwhelmed and bowed to the earth with sadness, He struggles in the bitterest strife on the Mount of Olives. Already the traitorous Judas approaches at the head of a band of enemies, shamelessly misusing the token of love as a sign of betrayal.

Thus falsely did Joab deal with Amasa, piercing his heart while offering him the kiss of friendship.

And then, with Christ, we stand at the Mount of Olives — we witness His anguish, we hear the sorrowing, reproachful tone in which he says to his disciples: «What, could ye not watch with me one hour», an appeal which certainly many of us has repeated when watching alone in pain and sorrow. — But human flesh is weak — the disciples again fall asleep and again the agony of death steals over the Redeemer. — The beautiful profile of the pale, sorrow-stricken countenance stands out from the background — and the angel approaches Him in His Despair; — strengthened through the aid of the Father, the Son of Man goes forth to meet His destiny. — But we know that the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

Jesus vor Annas.

Jesus before Annas.

Prolog.

Prologue

O der schaurigen Nacht! Sehet den Heiland an! — Von Gericht zu Gericht wird er umhergeschleppt. — Allenthalben kommt Schmähung — Und Misshandlung entgegen Ihm.

Behold how the Saviour is dragged from one Tribunal to another, receiving insult and ill-treatment from all. For a truthful word spoken to Annas, a coward strikes him in the face, hoping by this act to gain praise for himself.

Ein freimüthiges Wort, das er zu Annas spricht, — Lohnt ein Bösewicht Ihn, schlägt ihn mit roher Faust, — Um sich Lob zu verdienen, — In's holdselige Angesicht.

A like humiliating blow was given to Micaiah for revealing the truth to King Ahab.

Solcher schmähliche Lohn ward dem Michäas auch, — Da er Wahrheit enthüllt Achab dem Könige; — Von den Lügenpropheten — Gibt ihm einer den Backenstreich.

Wahrheit erntet gar oft Hass und Verfolgung nur; — Doch ihr möget ihr Licht schauen und bannen auch — Endlich wird es obsiegen — Und durchbrechen die Finsternis.

Hate and persecution are often the reward of truth, but whether we accept or reject it, eventually it will conquer and its light pierce the darkness.

Up till now we have consoled ourselves, on hearing the sentence of death upon the Saviour, that it cannot be possible — we still hoped, that what the prophets prophesied was only in the spirit; but when we see the Son of God in the hands of his enemies, we know that all comes to pass, that all now stands out visibly before us which we conceived to be impossible to be witnessed.

Jesus vor Kaiphas.

Prolog.

Vor erbosten Feinden, nun seinen Richtern, — Steht der Herr in Schweigen geschüllt: geduldig — Hört er all die Klage und Lüge, selbst das — Urtheil des Todes.

Wie einst Naboth schuldlos verfolgt, verurtheilt — Ward durch falsches Zeugnis als Gotteslästerer, — So auch Er, dess einzige Schuld ist: Wahrheit, — Liebe und Wohlthun.

Bald auch werdet ihr von entmenschten Knechten — Ihn umrungen sch'n, des Gespöttes Rohheit — Preisgegeben, höhnisch misshandelt unter — Wildem Gelächter.

Im geduldigen Job, dem in tiefster Trübsal — Selbst von seinen Freunden mit Spott Belad'n, — Seht ihr vorgebildet des lieben Heilands — Himmlische Sanftmut.

Jesus before Caiaphas.

Prologue.

In profound silence Christ stands before his judges and enemies, patiently listening to their accusations, false witnesses and sentence of death.

Just as Naboth, was wrongly accused and condemned as a blasphemer of God, so also was He, who was all Love, Charity and Truth. Soon you will see Him the sport of cruel hirelings, scorned and ill-treated. The meekness of the Saviour see foreshadowed in Job's patient acceptance of his trials, and even his friends' derision.

I forbear to depict scene for scene — the cruel trials before Caiaphas and Annas, the rough treatment by the soldiers, the whole torment of martyrdom, which the God in Man had to go through.

Des Judas Verzweiflung.

Prolog.

Warum irrt Judas sinnesverwirrt
umher? — Ihn martert, ach, des bösen
Gewissens Qual. — Die Blutschuld lastet
auf der Seele, — Wandelt in Feuer den
Sold der Sünde.

Beweine, Juda, was du verbrochen hast! —
Lösch' es mit Thränen der Busse aus! —
Demütig hoffend fleh' um Gnade! — Noch
steht die Pforte des Heils dir offen.

O weh! Wohl quält die bitterste Reue
ihn; — Doch durch das Dunkel leuchtet
kein Hoffnungsstrahl. — Zu gross, zu
gross ist meine Sünde! — Ruft er mit
Kain, dem Brudermörder.

Wie diesen, ungetröstet und ungehüsst, —
Erfasst mit Schrecken irre Verzweiflung
ihn. — Das ist der Endeslohn der
Sünde; — Solchem Geschieke treibt sie
entgegen.

The way in which the actors perform all this, with what nicety of perception — how all the scenes, however boisterous, are still kept within the bounds of good taste, — to realize all this we must have witnessed it. Amidst all this again, come the affecting scenes of the faithless disciple, the repentance of Peter, the terrible ending of Judas.

Christus vor Pilatus.

Prolog

Kaum ertönte das Wort: Tod ihm, des
Moscs Feind! — Tönt es vielstimmig
nach. Dürstend mit Tigerdurst — Nach
dem Blute der Unschuld — Eilen sie
zu Pilatus hin.

Vor des Heiden Gericht häuft ihr Unge-
stüm, — Unerschöpflich beredt, Klagen auf
Klagen an, — Ungeduldig erharrend —
Den verdamnenden Urtheilsspruch.

The Despair of Judas.

Prologue.

Distracted by the qualms of conscience,
Judas roams alone. His sin burns heavily
into his soul. Weep and repent, O Judas,
for your sin is great, and pray that
salvation may yet be yours. No hope
comes to him, for he cries: Too great,
too great is my sin. So too cried Cain,
when the horror of his deed and despair
fell upon him. Thus does sin pay its debt.

Christ Before Pilate.

Prologue.

No sooner are the words Death
to Him, the Enemy of Moses, uttered,
than the cry is taken up by the crowd,
and with blood-thirsty eagerness they
hasten to Pilate, and furiously demand
Christ's sentence to death.

*So ertönte auch einst wider den Daniel —
Tausendstimmiger Ruf: Er hat den
Bel zerstört! — Fort zur Grube der
Löwen! — Diesen werde zum Frasse er!*

*Ach! Wenn trugvoller Wahn sich in die
Menschenbrust — Hat den Eingang ge-
bahnt, kennt sich der Mensch nicht mehr. —
Unrecht wird ihm zur Tugend; —
Tugend hasst und befeindet er.*

*So once against Daniel was raised
a cry «He has destroyed Babel. Let him
be the food of Lions.» Alas! When
delusions enter the heart of man, wisdom
and justice no longer control his actions.*

And now they drag Him, the Man without Sin, to Pilate, that he may pronounce upon Him the sentence of death. — A fresh gleam of hope rises in our hearts, — the noble Roman sees through the machinations of the Jewish High Council, like sledge-hammer blows his forcible arguments fall upon the heads of the High Priests, and it really does one good to hear how he tells them the truth.

Christus vor Herodes.

Prolog.

*Neue Schmach begegnet dem Liebe-
vollsten — Vor Herodes, weil er dem
eitlen Fürsten — Nicht die Schergabe,
nicht Wunderkräfte — Schmeichelnd zur
Schau trägt.*

*Deshalb wird der Weiseste von den
Thoren — Als ein Thor behandelt, im
weissen Kleide — Ausgestellt zur Schau
für der Fürstenknechte — Höhnende
Kurzweil.*

*Samson, der gefürchtete Heldenjüng-
ling, — Jetzt des Augenlichtes beraubt,
gefesselt, — Steht, verlacht, verachtet ob
seiner Schwäche, — vor den Philistern.*

*Doch, der schwach jetzt scheint, wird
die Stärke zeigen; — Der erniedrigt
steht, wird in Hoheit glänzen. — Ueber
der Nichtswürdigen Spott erhaben —
Thronet die Tugend.*

Christ before Herod.

Prologue.

*The Saviour is brought before Herod
where fresh humiliations await him
because he refuses to exhibit his miraculous
powers; arrayed in the garb of the King
of Fools, the All-wise-one is delivered
to the king's hirelings for their sport.*

*Samson the once powerful, now
blinded and bound, is taunted by the
Philistines for his weakness. He who
appears weak may yet show strength,
and the lowly be raised to greatness. Virtue
will triumph over the mockery of infamy.*

But he is too weak to set the Saviour free; he sends him to Herod that the latter may condemn him. But this worldly sensualist, who had John the Baptist executed in cold blood, — finds no fault in the Lamb of God — he sends

him back again to Pilate; but Pilate again refuses to pass the sentence of death and asks to hear the general voice of the people, -- in the meantime however he orders Christ to be scourged.

*Die Geisselung und Dornen-
krönung.*

Prolog

*Ach, welcher Anblick, ewig beneidens-
wert — Dem Jünger Christi stellt sich
den Augen dar! — Der Leib des Herrn
ringsum verwundet — Von den un-
zähligen Geißelstreichen!*

*Sein Haupt umhüllt vom spitzigen Stachel-
kranz! — Bluttriefend, kaum noch
kenntlich, sein Angesicht! — Wem sollte
da nicht eine Thräne — Innigen Mitleids
vom Auge quellen?*

*Als Vater Jakob sah seines Lieblinges —
Von Blut getränktes Kleid, wie erbehte
er! — Wie weinte er, voll Schmerz
ausrufend — Herzen durchdringende
Jammerlaute!*

*Lasst uns auch weinen, da wir den
göttlichen — Freund uns'rer Seele solches
erdulden seh'n! — Denn leider! Uns're,
uns're Sünden — Haben sein liebendes
Herz verwundet.*

*The scourging and crowning with
thorns.*

Prologue.

*O what a sad sight meets the eyes
of the followers of Christ! The body
of the Lord torn by much scourging,
a crown of sharp thorns upon His
head! His face disfigured by blood!
Who would not shed a pilying tear?*

*When Jacob saw the bloody coat of
his beloved son, weeping and sorrow
took possession of him. Shall we not
also weep at the sight of the sufferings
of our Divine Friend, when for our
sins He has suffered this agony?*

*Not yet have they from raging ceas'd —
Their thirst for vengeance is not still'd;
Only on thoughts of murder brouds
The band, with Satan's hatred fill'd.
Can nothing soften then these hearts?*

*Not even His body by scourging torn.
Cover'd with wounds innum'rabl'e?
Can sympathy by nought be waked?*

And now the awful torture is continued. Christ is bound to the pillar, scourged, and when covered all over with blood, crowned with the crown of thorns. — The manner in which this scene is enacted, how the soldier who puts the crown of thorns on him first of all puts on the iron glove so as not to hurt himself, and the way in which the men press the crown, with crossed rods, down on the noble head — it is all so cruelly yet quietly carried out that it cuts into our very souls without at the same time offending our æsthetic feelings.

He wishes to hear the voice of the people — let him hear it, cry the High Priests, and already that distant murmur of an uproar begins to sound in the streets of the city. — Headed by the High Council, spurred on by the inflammatory words of the fanatical Priests, the misled, maddened crowd, among whom are the traders which Christ drove from the temple, rushes out of all the streets of the city. — As a mighty flood, the rioters move on, to the front of Pilate's palace.

Pale with fear, crying «Revolt», Rebellion» the servants rush out. The words of the high priests fall like firebrands among the frenzied mob, kindling flames of ungovernable fury.

*Jesus wird zum Kreuzestode
verurteilt.*

Prolog.

*Eine Jammergestalt steht der Erlöser
da. — Selbst von Mitleid gerührt, stellt
ihn Pilatus vor. — Hast denn du kein
Erbarment, — O bethörtes, verführtes
Volk?*

*Nein! Von Wahnsinn erfasst, ruft es:
Ans Kreuz mit ihm! — Schreit nach
Marter und Tod über den Heiligsten. —
Für Barabbas, den Mörder, — Fordert
es die Begnadigung!*

*O, wie anders stand einst vor dem
Aegyptervolk — Josef! Freundengesang,
jubel umtönte ihn; — Als der Heiland
Aegyptens — Warder feierlich vorgestellt.*

*Ihn, den Heiland der Welt, aber umtobt
mit Wut — Ein verblendetes Volk, ruhet
und rastet nicht, — Bis unwillig der
Richter — Spricht: so nehmt ihn und
kreuzigt ihn!*

Jesus condemned to Death.

Prologue.

*Before us stands the Redeemer in such
pitiful plight, that even Pilate is touched.
Will the people have no compassion?
«No», they cry, «To the Cross with Him»,
demanding his pain and death, and
pardon for Barabbas.*

*How differently was Joseph received
by the Egyptians; jubilantly he was
greeted as the Saviour of Egypt. But
He, the Saviour of the world is surrounded
by a furious people who rest not until
the judge reluctantly declares «Take ye
him and crucify Him.»*

Once again the Governor, Pontius Pilate, endeavours to save Christ: «I will release unto you Christ instead of this murderer Barabbas». But no, they cry out once more, saying, «Away with this man and release unto us Barabbas». Not even the pale countenance of the «Ecce homo» can move this infuriated rabble.

When once the surging wave of passion has taken possession of the brains and hearts of men — their eyes are closed for the noble and beautiful, and their hearts are dead to all sense of sympathy.

«His blood be upon us and our children», they cry. — Oh wretched, blinded humanity, how often have ye called down from heaven the curse upon you and your descendants, from which whole generations have had to suffer.

Pilate is forced to yield. He washes his hands — saying that he is innocent of the blood of this just person — and breaks his staff. Reluctantly the words proceed from his mouth «Take ye Him and crucify Him.»

Der Kreuzweg.

Prolog.

Der erzwungene Urtheilsspruch ist gesprochen — Schon hinaus zum Berge der Schödelstätte — Sch'n wir Jesum wanken, belastet mit dem — Balken des Kreuzes.

Einst trug Isaak willig auf seinem Rücken — Jenes Opferholz auf die Bergeshöhe, — Wo er selbst als Opfer bestimmt war nach dem — Willen Jehovas.

Jesus auch trägt willig die Last des Kreuzes. Welches durch das Opfer des heiligen Leibes — Bald nun werden sollte zum segensreichen — Baum des Lebens.

Denn wie, aufgerichtet dort in der Wüste, — Heilung brachte der eh'ernen Schlange Anblick, — So geht Trost und Segen und Heil auch aus vom — Stamme des Kreuzes.

The Way of the Cross.

Prologue.

Sentence being pronounced, we now see Jesus on the way to Golgotha, stumbling beneath the burden of the Cross. Isaac once willingly carried to the mountain, the wood which was to light his own sacrificial fire.

Jesus also bears the heavy cross, which through His holy love and suffering is soon to become a Tree of Life, rich in blessing. Just as casting the eyes on the brazen serpent, brought healing, so we derive consolation and blessings from the Cross.

— — —

Now come the two wonderful tableaux: Isaac bearing the wood for the sacrifice up Mount Moriah, and the Setting up of the brazen Serpent as a symbol of the Crucifixion.

Again the curtain rises and we see the group of the holy women anxiously seeking the Lord, and knowing as yet nothing of the fate which is to befall Him. Out of one of the city streets comes a sad procession — a criminal who is being dragged to execution — unhappy Mother, now becomes verified that which was prophesied of thee, that a sword shall pierce thy soul; be firm, do not break down, O tortured heart, when thou seest Him, the innocent Man, Himself dragging the Cross to Golgotha. — For the third time He falls under the heavy burden — then they take the cross off His shoulders and put it upon Simon of Cyrene; and now the women, lamenting and bewailing Him, approach. But we hear the gentle voice of the Patient Sufferer saying Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. — Then Veronica hands Him the linen cloth to wipe the sweat from off His brow — but the soldiers drive the women away, and there remains but one consolation left to them, that of following the procession to the place of execution.

I cannot better introduce the scene of the Crucifixion to the reader than by giving the description taken from the work *„Am Kreuz“*, as written by my mother. I can well do so, as the description of the Passion Play is so faithfully depicted, and, independent of the rest of the plot, is complete in itself.

«The scene changes. The Chorus enters, in black mourning robes, and commences singing the dirge:

Jesus auf Golgatha.

A. Prolog.

(Melodrama.)

*Auf, fromme Seelen, auf und gehet,
Von Reuschmerz und Dankdurchglüht,
Mit mir zu Golgatha und schet,
Was hier zu euren Heil geschieht!
Dort stirbt der Mittler zwischen Gott
Und Menschen den Versöhnungstod.*

*Ach! nackt, von Wunden nur bekleidet,
Liegt er hier bald am Kreuz für dich!
Die Rache der Gottlosen weidet
An seiner Blöße frechend sich.
Und er, der dich, o Sünder, liebt,
Schweigt, leidet, duldet und vergiebt.*

*Ich hör' schon seine Glieder krachen,
Die man aus den Gelenken zerrt.
Wem soll's das Herz nicht beben machen,
Wenn er den Strich des Hammers hört,
Der schmetternd, ach! durch Hand
und Fuss
Grausame Nägel treiben muss!*

*Auf, fromme Seelen, naht dem Lamme,
Das sich für euch freiwillig schenkt!
Betrachtet es am Kreuzesstamm!
Seht! Zwischen Mördern aufgehängt,
Giebt Gottes Sohn sein Blut! Und ihr
Gebt keine Thräne ihm dafür?*

*Selbst seinen Mördern zu vergeben,
Hört man ihn zu dem Vater fleh'n,
Und bald, bald endigt er sein Leben,
Damit wir ew'gem Tod entgeh'n.
Durch seine eine Seite dringt ein Speer
Und öffnet uns sein Herz noch mehr.*

*Wer kann die hohe Liebe fassen,
Die bis zum Tode liebt,
Und statt der Mörder Schar zu hassen,
Noch segnend ihr vergibt?
O bringet dieser Liebe
Alt Eure Herzenstricke
Am Kreuzaltar
Zum Opfer dar.*

Jesus at Golgatha.

Prologue and Melodrama.

*Arise, ye pious souls, and come,
While penitence your hearts inspire,
With me, and see, 'mid Calvary's gloom,
What for your saving doth transpire:
There, for your sins, the Lord doth give
His life that all the world may live.*

*See, naked, and with wounds all o'er
He suffers on the cross for thee;
On Him the godless insult pour,
And gloat upon His misery.
And He who loves each one that lives,
Is silent, suffers, and — forgives.*

*I hear His tender limbs give way
As they from out their joints are broke;
Whose heart fills not with dread dismay
When he now hears the hammer's stroke,
Which, through His precious hands
and feet
The large and cruel nails must beat!*

*Come, pious souls, the Lamb draw nigh,
Who gives His life so willingly;
Upon the cross suspended high
Between two malefactors, see,
God's Son His sacred blood doth shed.
And ye? Have ye no tears instead?*

*Yea, e'en His murderers to forgive,
We hear Him pray with dying breath;
Soon He for us His life will give
To free us from eternal death.*

*Yea, through His side the spear doth bore,
And opens us His heart still more.*

*Who can such love as His conceive,
That loveth unto death;
Who 'stead of hating can forgive
His foes with dying breath!*

*O bring us offering to this love
The thanks that every heart should move;
And lay it, while the Saviour dies,
Before the Cross as sacrifice.*

The Chorus has completed its song of lamentation. A noise, heard from behind the curtain, accompanies the last verses — hammering — what can it mean? No — the very thought of it is too awful! — We hear it — we try not to listen to it! — The silence of death prevails among the audience — the blows of the hammer become more distinct — the curtain rises — there He is lying, His feet towards us, stretched out flat on the Cross, which is on the ground! And they drive the nails through His limbs with heavy blows. They bore through these tender hands, which have never done harm to any living creature; which, wherever raised, healed all wounds and relieved all pain — these feet which carried the Divine form so lightly — gliding over the hot sands of the country and over the rolling waves of the ocean — onwards towards the goal of love. — He now lies pitifully here on the ground, stretched out on the accursed tree — His muscles tense and rigid as a fallen stag. To the right and the left, already erected, stand the low crosses of the two thieves. The latter have their arms merely bound to the crossbeam, and only the feet are fastened with nails. Christ alone is nailed through hands and feet, the Pharisees being troubled by a presentiment of their not being able to kill Him altogether. If they dared, they would tear him in pieces and scatter the parts to the four winds, so as to be quite certain of His not rising again the third day, as He prophesied.

The executioners have finished binding the thieves: Now the King of the Jews must be raised!

«Raise the cross! Lay hold! commands the centurion. Breathless silence reigns supreme, every heart stands still. The four executioners lay hold with their muscular arms. — «Up with it. Don't leave go!

The cross is heavy, the soldiers groan, and push it up with their shoulders — their veins swell out — another heave — up it goes in a huge sweep — humanity bows its head, shuddering at the atrocious deed.

It cannot be, it is impossible! It can be, and is. Horror seizes the on-looker — his limbs tremble. The spectators clutch hold of each other, lest the cross fall on them and crush them. The cross is coming — coming over the whole world! Higher — and ever higher! Hold tight — don't let go!

It stands, it is fastened!

There hangs the Divine Form, naked and bare. The nails go right through the bleeding hands and feet — and our eyes, which would be blind to the fact, are obliged to witness it — our hearts, which long to make all undone, must bear it! But we can control ourselves no longer, in loud sobs our long restrained grief bursts forth, and our trembling hands are clasped in suppliant love. — Unutterable pity is poured out in uncontrollable tears, forming a cloud of sympathetic sorrow about the head of the Crucified One, to lighten the agony of death. And gradually the eye becomes accustomed to that which it has never witnessed before,

and is able to gaze on the awful scene. Divine grace spreads over the slender Form, and as beauty eternally reconciles heaven and hell, and ennobles even the most terrible, so our horror harmoniously resolves itself into pious admiration of perfect manly beauty, such as is unfolded to our gaze in chaste calm and majesty.

It grows dark. There is a rustling and murmuring in the air, which comes nearer and nearer. Is it the sound of the wings of the angels of death? Or is it a flight of those sacred birds, of which the legend says, that they tried to peck out the nails with which the Saviour was nailed to the Cross, until they bent their weak little bills crooked, and to which the name of cross-bills was given?

The Sufferer up above is quiet and still. — His bright eye alone speaks — speaks to the invisible powers, which reign and hover around in this hour of consummation.

At the foot of the Cross the soldiers are casting lots for His vesture — the priests are triumphant — the wild beast «cynicism» is lurking with wolfish eagerness till its prey fall undisputed, and showing its teeth in anger, cries in fierce mockery: «If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross» —

«He calls upon God, let Him save Him, if He has found favour in His sight!

He would destroy the temple and build it up again in three days. — Show now Thy power proud King of the Jews:»

Hereupon the tortured One in agony turns His head:

Lord, forgive them, for they know not what they do. —

And the one thief, even in his own dying agony, mocks at Him; but the other rebukes him saying «We receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss!» and he beseeches: «Lord remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom!»

Then Christ utters the wonderful words: «Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise!»

Fresh cries of mockery from the Pharisees: «He saved others; Himself He cannot save!»

But Christ no longer hears them, His senses are numbing; He bends His head to Mary and John: «Woman, behold thy son! Son, behold thy mother!»

And now come the signs of approaching death. He becomes restless — He struggles for breath, His tongue cleaves to the roof of His mouth.

I thirst!»

They hold up to Him a sponge filled with vinegar, at the end of a long spear.

He sips, but it does not refresh Him. His anguish has reached its highest point: «Eli, Eli, lama, sabachthani!» groans the breaking heart: a wave of agony

passes over the noble form in its death-struggle. Then, deeply sighing, He speaks in tones of an aeolian harp, the words *It is finished! Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!* He gently bends His head, and dies. —

Roars of thunder shake the earth, dust whirls up from the ground, and steam hisses out of the clefts and darkens the air. The graves open and give up their dead. — In holy rage the Father strikes the earth as He takes the sacrifice back which He left only too long to pitiless torment. The temple is burst asunder, the veil is rent — and in the fire of Heaven the Father's heart shines forth upon Him, the cruelly-treated, patient, and obedient Son!

Come, O Beloved! rings the longing cry in Heaven. Come, O Beloved! is re-echoed from mouth to mouth among the audience down below. They still have to witness how the beloved Body is pierced by a sharp lance, till the warm blood flows out of the wound — and it is as if the thrust went through the heart of the whole world. They must still hear the howling of the wolves contending for the holy Body — but the tortured soul may rest at last with Him.

The hand of the Governor has protected the Body and handed it over to His family.

Stricken with awe at the terrible signs, the crowd becomes scattered as dust before the wind — the priests flee, pale with fear, back to their shattered temple. Golgotha becomes deserted. The scoffings and blasphemings are hushed, the uproar of the elements has abated — and the holy calm of evening surrounds those left behind. It is finished, He has gone home to the bosom of His Father! Noiselessly do the drops of Blood trickle on to the sand. Nothing is heard but the gentle weeping of the women at the foot of the Cross.

And now compassionate love approaches, and never has such faithful devotion been witnessed as that which this next hour brings. The first blades of that love now burst forth, the seed of which has since spread over all the earth.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus come with ladders and tools to take the Body down. — They climb up and bind the dead Body with long strips of white linen, the ends of which they throw over the Cross. The friends standing round take hold of them, acting as a resisting force in order to let the Body down gently. Joseph and Nicodemus now begin to draw the nails out of the flesh with pincers; we hear the wood creak and splinter, so fast are the nails driven in.

Mary is sitting on a stone, and with folded hands resignedly awaits her Son. *O Noble men, bring me soon the Body of my Child!* she gently implores.

The women spread a linen cloth before her feet to receive Him, — at last the nails are drawn out. —

Carefully the one friend places the loosened rigid arms of the Dead upon the shoulders of the other so that they shall not drop suddenly, — Joseph of Arimathea embraces the Body: *Come holy, blessed Burden, come rest on my shoulders!*

He descends from the ladder with the Body. Partly carried, partly suspended in the cloths, the lifeless Form is let down from the pillar of torture. Nicodemus spreads out his arms towards it: Come, holy Body of my only Friend, let me embrace thee! And they carry him to Mary — that the Son may rest once more in the lap of the Mother. And she takes Him in her arms, all covered with wounds, the Son-born again in sorrow.

Mary Magdalene kneels by the side: Let me once again kiss the hands which have so often blessed me. And with chaste fervour the lips of the sinner touch the cold pierced hands of the Body.

Another of the women throws herself over it: Beloved Master, one more tear upon thy lifeless Body! And the sobbing murmurings sound sweet and gratifying as peaceful evening bells after the terrible storm.

The men on the other hand stand around in mute adoration.

Die Auferstehung.

The Resurrection.

Prolog.

Prologue.

Nun ist alles vollbracht, Friede und Freude uns! — Freiheit hat uns sein Kampf, Leben sein Tod gebracht! — O, von Dank und von Liebe — Glüh' das Herz der Geretteten!

Eingesenkt in die Gruft ruhet der Heilige, — Doch zur kürzesten Ruh', denn der Gesalbte wird, — Die Verwesung nicht schauend, — Neubelebt wieder aufersteh'n.

So wird mächtig der Herr sprengen des Grabes Thor, — Aus dem Dunkel der Nacht, strahlend im Lichtesglanz, — Zur Beschämung der Feinde — Sich erheben in Herrlichkeit.

It is accomplished. Peace and joy! Through His strife comes our freedom, and our life through His death. Let our hearts overflow with love and thankfulness. Brought to rest in the tomb for a short time, the Anointed One, free from corruption of the flesh, will soon rise. Then will the Lord throw open the door of the grave, and in greatest majesty arise in glorious light, to the confounding of his enemies.

He is laid in the grave. A funeral chorus bids the weary soul and the beloved Body rest from the torments of the past.

Grabgesang.

*Ruhe sanft nun, heilige Hülle,
Ruhe in des Grabes Stille
Von den Leidenismühen aus!
Ruhe sanft im Schoß der Erde,
Bist du wirst verklaret sein.
Der Verwesung Opfer werde
Nie dein heiliges Gebein. —
Christen, senkt am Pilgerstabe
Hin das Haupt in Ehrfurcht still;
Denn ihr steht am heiligen Grabe
Dessen, der statt goldner Gabe
Nur ein Herz voll Einfalt will.*

Burial Song.

*Softly rest now, sacred body
In the stillness of the grave.
Rest in Peace from pain and labour
Softly rest within earth's bosom
Till Thou shalt be glorified.
Never shall Thy Holy Body
To corruption be a prey.
Christian, low in veneration
Bow your head upon your staff:
By His grave now take your station,
Who for gifts of consecration,
But a simple heart demands.*

In front of the sepulchre lie the watchmen, whom the malice of the Pharisees has placed there to keep watch.

A great noise is heard. The stone at the door of the sepulchre is overturned, the watchmen fall to the ground, and out of the sepulchre appears the Saviour, who has overcome death.

Prolog.

*Er ist erstanden! Jubelt, ihr Himm-
lischen! — Er ist erstanden! Jubelt, ihr
Sterblichen! — Der Löwe aus dem Stamme
Juda -- Er hat der Schlange den Kopf
zertreten.*

*Fest steht der Glaube! Freudige Hoff-
nung weckt — In unsrer Brust das
Vorbild und Unterpfand — Auch unsrer
künftigen Auferstehung! — Rufet im
Jubellon: Alleluja!*

*Wir sahen einzich'n Ihn in Jerusalem —
Voll Demut, ach, zur tiefsten Erniedri-
gung. — Nun lasst uns schauen, eh
wir scheiden, — Des Triumphierenden
Siegesfeier.*

*Jetzt zieht Er ein zur höchsten Verherr-
lichung — Voll Majestät ins neue
Jerusalem, Wo er wird alle um sich
sammeln, Die er erkaufte mit
seinem Blute.*

Prologue.

*He is risen, may Heaven and earth
rejoice. The serpent's head is bruised
by the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. Our
hearts are made joyful by the promise
of our resurrection. Hallelujah! His
entry into Jerusalem was humble; His
sufferings there of the deepest and most
humiliating. Now behold the victor in
greatest glory, ascending to the New
Jerusalem where will be gathered all
who have been redeemed by His blood.
Rejoice, Oh friends, and return home,
fortified by the great love you have this
day beheld. Fill your hearts with adoration*

*Von diesem Anblick freudig ermutiget —
Kehrt heim, o Freunde, innigster Liebe
voll — Für den, der bis zum Tod euch
liebte — Und noch im Himmel euch
ewig liebet!*

*Dort, wo ertönt das ewige Siegeslied: —
Lob sei dem Lamm, welches getödet
war! — Um unsern Heiland dort ver-
einigt — Wollen wir alle uns wiederschen!*

Halleluja!

*Überwunden — überwunden
Hat der Held der Feinde Macht
Er — er schlummerte nur Stunden
In der düstern Grabesnacht.*

*Singet Ihm in heiligen Psalmen,
Streuet Ihm die Siegespalmen,
Auferstanden ist der Herr.
Jauchzet ihm, ihr Himmel zu,
Sing' dem Sieger, Erde, du.
Halleluja Dir, Erstandener!*

*Preis Dir, Du Todesüberwinder,
Der verdammt auf Golgatha!
Preis Dir, Du Heiliger der Sünder,
Der Du starbst auf Golgatha!*

*Lass des Bundes Harfe klingen,
Dass die Seele freudig bebt,
Lass dem Sieger Kronen bringen,
Der erstanden ewig lebt!*

*Preis, der Du am Sühnaltar
Für uns gabst Dein Leben dar.
Du hast uns erkaufet Dir,
Dir nur leben, sterben wir!*

*of Him, who gave His life for you, and
Whose love from Heaven now guides
you. There reunited with our Saviour
we all shall meet again. Hallelujah!*

Hallelujah!

*Overcome — Overcome
The Hero hath conquered
The might of the foe!
Few hours only, in the gloom
Of the grave hath he slept!
Sing to Him in holy Psalms!
Strew before him victory palms!
The Lord is risen!
Rejoice, O ye Heavens!
Sing, Earth, to the Victor!
Hail to Thee who hast risen
Hallelujah!*

*Praise Him, Conqueror of Death
Once condemned on Golgatha!
Praise Thee, amidst sinners Hot,
Who for us on Calvary died!*

*Let our harps of concord sound,
That the soul with joy may tremble,
To the Victor crowns now bring.*

*Praise to Thee, who on the altar
Gavest thy blessed life for us!
Thou hast purchased our salvation,
After death — Eternal Life!
Hallelujah!*

sings the Chorus, and now, after the music of the Halleluja, follows the final apotheosis. Christ ascends, out of the midst of his disciples and the holy women, into heaven.

But the shadows of evening are fast approaching, -- the sun's rays shine slantingly over the stage of the Passion. — Slowly the curtain falls amidst the

final strains of the Hallelujah Chorus. And over the vast plains it rings out to the rocky heights, and it seems as if all nature would join in loud rejoicings over the Resurrection.

Quietly, most deeply moved, the crowd of people leave the theatre. The mountains and rosy meads lie spread out in the golden glow of evening. The night-trains, which carry the pilgrims off again, take with them numbers of people serious and deeply affected, and in many a heart, which came hither in the icy bann of the chilling cold of winter, it has become Eastertide — the blissful spring-time and Easter, full of the wonder of the Resurrection and Heaven's exultant joy. Of what it has witnessed, felt, and suffered, and of what the revelation has effected in it, the heart cannot readily give account yet — but it uncontrollably joins in the final words of the Chorus:

Halleluja!

Praise, Honour, Worship, Power, and Glory

Be to Thee from Everlasting to Everlasting!





Stendamour, S & C.

By permission of Leo Schweyer, Stuttgart.

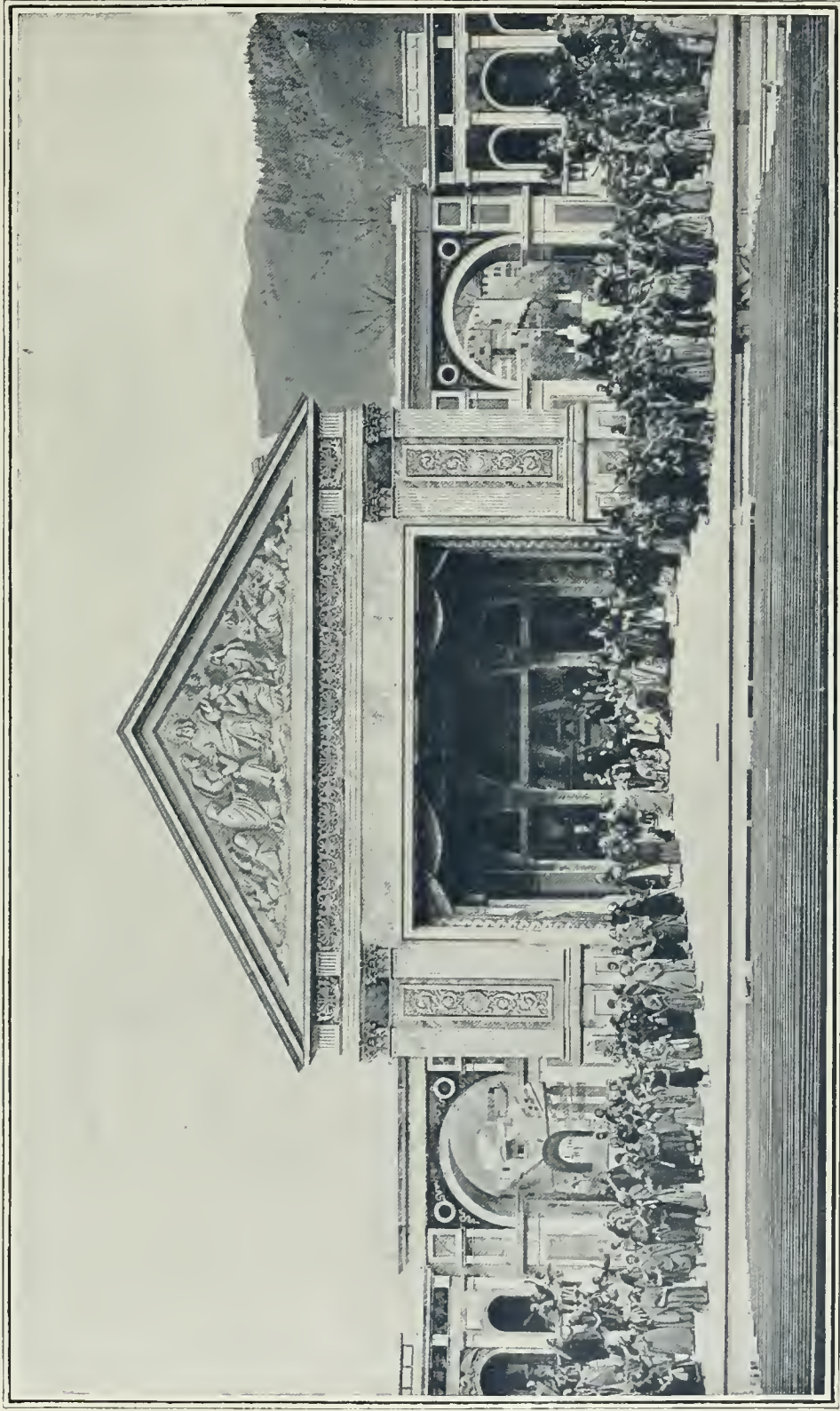
The Virgin Mary (Anna Flunger)
Oberammergau Passion Play 1900



By permission of Leo Schwyer, Stuttgart.

Christus (Anton Lang)
Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.

Trax



Entry into Jerusalem and Purging of the Temple. (Photograph of 1890.)



With permission of Leo Schweyer, Stuttgart.

Christ taking leave of the Virgin Mary.
Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.



Schreiber, Chm.

With permission of Leo Schweyer, Stuttgart.

The Last Supper.
Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.



With permission of Leo Schwyer, Stuttgart.

Christ before Pilate.
Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.



With permission of Leo Schweyer Stuttgart.

The Crucifixion.
Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.



With permission of Leo Schwyer, Stuttgart.

The Descent from the Cross.
Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.



With permission of Leo Schwyer, Stuttgart.

The Burial of Christ.
Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.



With permission of Leo Schweyer, Stuttgart

The Resurrection.
Oberammergau Passion Play 1900.

University of California
SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1388
Return this material to the library
from which it was borrowed.



NON-RENEWABLE

NOV - 5 1990

ILL/CSA

DUE 2 WKS FROM DATE RECEIVED

SRLF
QL

JAN 21 1992

LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Un

S